

No 394.

MAY 6<sup>th</sup>

—1910.

5 Cents.

# WILD WEST WEEKLY.

## YOUNG WILD WEST TEACHING A TENDERFOOT.

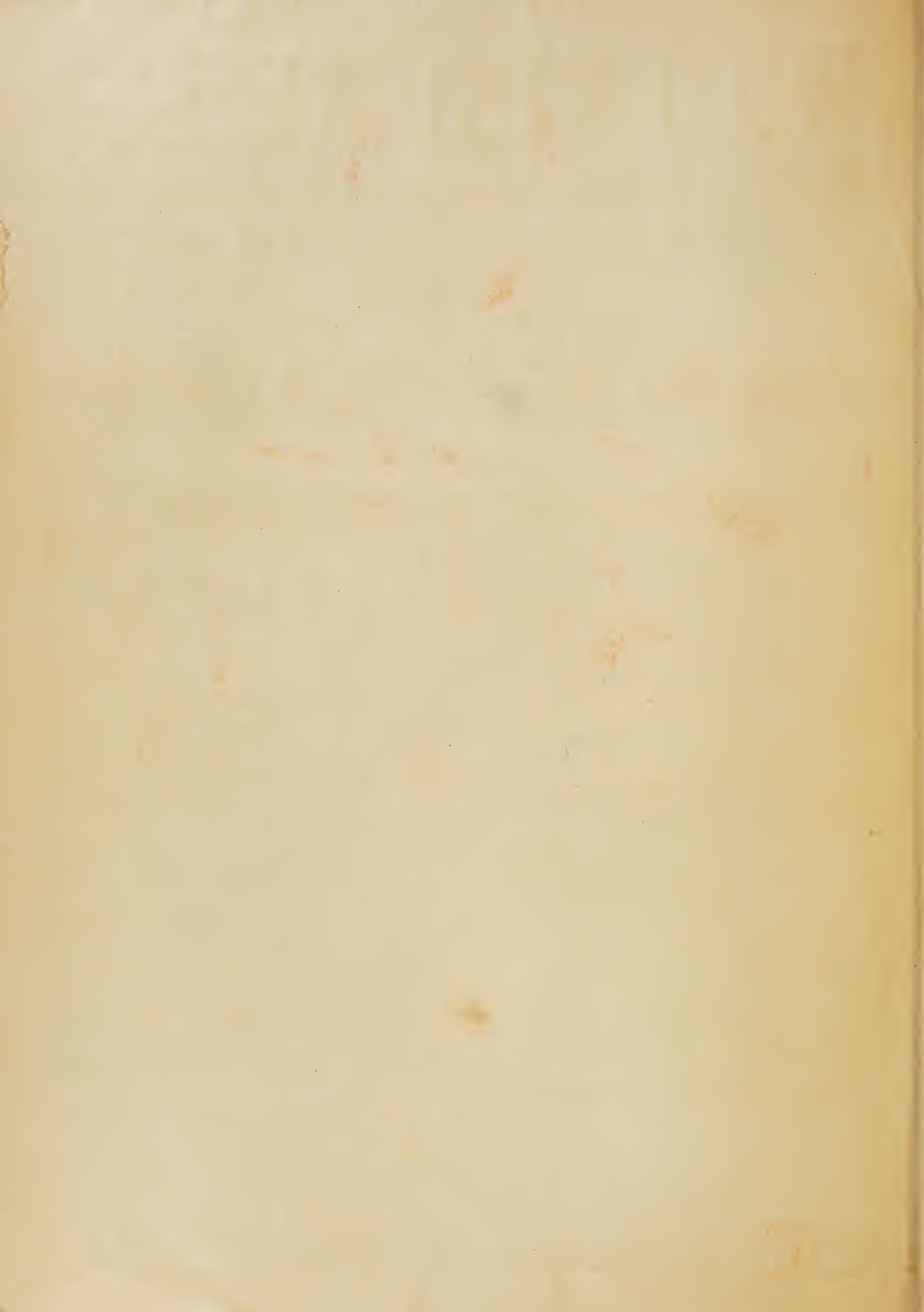
By AN OLD SCOUT.



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FRANK TOUSEY  
PUBLISHER.  
24 Union Square, New York.





# WILD WEST WEEKLY

*A Magazine Containing Stories, Sketches, Etc., of Western Life*

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1910, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

No. 394.

NEW YORK, MAY 6, 1910.

PRICE 5 CENTS.

## Young Wild West Teaching a Tenderfoot

OR,

## THE DUDE'S DUEL WITH THE DESPERADO

By AN OLD SCOUT

### CHAPTER I.

#### A LITTLE EXCITEMENT AT GLIMMER.

When the Overland Stage Coach Company's outfit pulled up before the Seven Up Hotel at Glimmer, Colorado, one evening in summer a few years ago, there was more than an ordinary gathering there to meet it.

The stage made but two trips a week, and when Joe Rasper, the driver and part owner of the old-fashioned vehicle, gave it out when he left the camp Monday morning that he intended to have a coat of bright "yaller" paint put on the stage while he laid over for the return trip, speculation had run rife among the miners as to how it would look.

Glimmer was still in its infancy, but rich ore had been found there, and many miners were already working paying claims. It lay in a little valley, about forty-seven miles from the town of Silverton, and it was from the last-named place that the stage ran.

"She sartinly does look fine, Joe," Rad Hickey, the mayor of the camp, called out, as he looked at the new yellow paint with admiring eyes. "Sorter reminds me of a circus chariot, blamed if she don't! Brought over a good load of pilgrims, too, I see. That's good. What we want here is population, 'cause population makes—Hello! You've fetched us a real, genuine dude, too, or I'm a liar!"

The passengers had been hopping down from the vehicle in a lively way, which showed how glad they were that the rough ride over the mountain trail was at an

end, and it was the appearance of a young man dressed in the height of fashion that caused the "mayor" to stop abruptly, and then give vent to the exclamation.

"That's right, Rad," the driver answered, a broad grin showing on his face. "Don't be surprised at anything I fetch over. Glimmer is sartinly gittin' ter be an awful drawin' card."

The dude had no sooner alighted from the stage than he turned and assisted a rather young and pretty girl to the ground.

She, too, was attired in stylish fashion, and the crowd of miners gathered about in front of the so-called hotel gazed at her in astonishment.

But suddenly Rad Hickey, the mayor, pulled off his hat and waving it over his head, shouted:

"Three cheers for ther dude tenderfoot an' ther fine-lookin' gal he's got with him, boys. Everybody jine in ther chorus."

Then it was that the crowd joined in giving an old-fashioned cheer.

The young couple looked confused and stood in a hesitating way before entering the hotel.

"Thank you for your very kind reception, gentlemen," the young man stammered, lifting his hat.

"You're welcome, young feller," Rad Hickey answered, quickly. "Step right on into ther hotel. Is that your wife with yer?"

"Ye-es." and then the dude blushed more than ever. "We were married only two weeks ago, and we have stopped here to see relatives on our wedding trip."



"Oh, Reggie!" exclaimed the bride, hiding her face with her handkerchief, "what did you tell them that for?"

"Reggie!" yelled a red-shirted miner at the top of his voice. "Boys, did yer hear that? Reggie is his name. Ain't that somethin' awful? Whoopce, whoopce! Wow, wow! Hurrah for Reggie an' his bride!"

While the men shouted the mayor stepped forward gallantly, and taking the tenderfoot by the arm quickly escorted him inside the building.

"There!" said he, "I reckon you feel a little better now. But jest take it easy. Ther boys don't mean yer no harm. They're jest showin' yer how glad they are to see a young married couple, an' especially ones that's togged out like you two are. Jumpin' catamounts! You sartinly do look like a real picture."

The young man and his bride both thanked the mayor, and then he bowed himself out and joined the throng.

Several passengers had come over in the stage, but they were mostly men, young and old, who had heard about the new mining camp and had come there to try their luck.

The newly painted stage coach soon drove off, and then the crowd surged into the bar room of the hotel, for they had yelled so much that no doubt their throats now needed something in the line of moisture.

It was not more than five minutes later when a miner came running inside excitedly.

"More strangers is comin', an' there's gals with 'em!" he exclaimed. "Come out an' have a look, boys. Reggie an' his bride sartinly made a fine appearance, but I reckon you'll see somethin' that beats them all holler. Here comes some real people of ther real old West, too!"

That was quite enough.

Several of the miners were so anxious to get outside that they left their drinks untouched on the bar.

Riding up the narrow winding trail that led into Glimmer was a party of eight.

Two of them were boys, one a tall man of thirty, perhaps; one a young woman; two young girls, and two were typical Chinese.

The latter were leading pack horses, and all were mounted on fine looking horses.

The riders certainly made a picturesque appearance, since they were all attired in fancy hunting costumes, save, of course, the two Celestials.

The girls wore bright colors, and the ease and grace with which they rode told that they were not new to that sort of thing.

Rad Hickey took just one look at the approaching riders and then he turned to the man who had given the information and said:

"Why, don't you know who they are?"

"Nope," was the reply. "I ain't got the least idea."

"Well, that boy ridin' along with that yaller-haired gal ahead is Young Wild West, ther champion deadshot. I thought almost everybody knowed who he was."

It was evident that many of those present had heard the name of Young Wild West before, for they at once set up a shout.

Young Wild West, for it surely was he, though he was still a hundred yards from the hotel, heard the shout and promptly waved his hat and answered to it.

With his long, light, chestnut hair hanging over his shoulders, the boy who had made such a name for himself through his daring feats and determination to do right, certainly made a dashing appearance.

His sweetheart, Arietta Murdock, riding at his side, was a fitting companion for him, too.

But as our readers are so well acquainted with Young Wild West and his friends by this time, it is not necessary to give a description of them.

Suffice it to say that the rest of the party consisted of Cheyenne Charlie, the scout, and his wife, Anna; Jim Dart and his sweetheart, Eloise Gardner, while the two Chinamen were servants who went with them on their trips in search of adventure, and bore the names of Hop Wah and Wing Wah.

It happened that our friends had struck the new mining camp more by accident than design; for they had come upon the trail leading to it late in the afternoon, and finding the fresh prints of wagon wheels and hoofs, they decided to come that way and see what was to be found.

As they rode up before the Seven Up Hotel the cheer was renewed, for by this time Rad Hickey had been able to let the men know what sort of a boy Young Wild West was.

He had seen him several times, so he declared, though he did not claim to be acquainted with him.

"Hello, Young Wild West!" he now called out, as he jumped down from the rickety porch of the shanty hotel and held out his hand to the young deadshot. "I don't s'pose yer know me, but I'll jest let yer know that you're welcome to Glimmer. This ain't no one-horse camp, either. She are ther real thing. There's gold dust here in plenty, an' all ther boys has got lots of money. Hooray!"

This was a signal for another cheer, and waiting until it had subsided our hero retorted:

"I am glad to hear what you say, Mr. —"

"Rad Hickey is my name," the miner hastened to reply. "I'm ther mayor of ther camp, too."

"Oh! Well, Mr. Hickey, we had no idea there was such a place as Glimmer so near at hand when we started out this morning. Much obliged to you for the welcome you have given us."

"Don't mention it, Young Wild West. I know all about you, and I know that you would be welcome anywhere, so long as there was honest people what lived there."

The boy smiled at this remark, and then as the clatter of hoofs came to his ears from a direction opposite to that by which they had approached the mining camp, he turned his head and looked that way.

A horseman was riding up at a gallop, and as he came a little nearer he pulled a gun from his belt and began shooting it in the air.

"It's Doc, ther desperado!" exclaimed the mayor, showing just the least signs of uneasiness. "He's in for a high old time by ther way he acts. Don't rile him, boys; let him have his own way, so long as he don't go too far. He's amighty bad man, but still he ain't never shot anybody yet, an' I've heard he always pays his bills."

Up came the horseman, leaving a cloud of dust behind



him, and just as he brought his foam-flecked steed to a halt the tenderfoot and his bride came out upon the porch.

If the newcomer had seen Young Wild West and his friends, he certainly had no eyes for them just now.

The sudden appearance of the young man, wearing a natty straw hat, seemed to fairly take away his breath.

The fact was that the newly wedded couple had come outside to get the luggage that had been left upon the porch when they entered the hotel in such a hurried manner.

Doc, the desperado, uttered a loud guffaw and quickly leaped from the back of his horse.

"What's this, boys?" he exclaimed, pointing his finger at the dude. "Jest git out of ther way there a minute."

The crowd got back in a hurry.

Then out came the desperado's gun.

Crack!

He fired a shot, and the bullet came so close to the feet of the young man that he uttered a cry of fear and leaped from the porch.

Crack!

Another shot was fired by the bad man, and then with a scream on her lips, the bride sprang down after her husband and caught him by the arm.

"Oh, Reggie!" she cried, excitedly. "He will kill you."

"Reggie!" exclaimed Doc, the desperado. "Is that his name? Well, I never heard such a blamed name afore in my life. Reggie! Ha, ha, ha! Reggie, ther dude. Well, you jest stand back, gal. I'll make Reggie do a few steps of a jig, an' I'll guarantee that I won't hurt him a bit, either."

At this juncture Young Wild West slipped from the back of the sorrel stallion he was riding and pushed his way to the scene.

"Stop that, boss!" he said to the bad man in a persuasive way. "Don't you see that the young lady is nearly frightened out of her wits?"

"You shut up, young feller," was the retort. "Jest wait till I git through with him, an' then I'll pay a little attention to you."

"All right," and Young Wild West stepped back a little.

It was evident that the desperado had changed his mind about shooting at the dude's feet, for he dropped his gun back into the holster and then stepped forward to seize him.

The young man carried a small grip in his left hand, and seeing this our hero gave a nod of satisfaction.

"Defend yourself, stranger," he called out, sharply.

"Oh, Reggie!" screamed the bride, while Doc gave vent to a roar of laughter and made a move as though to knock the straw hat from the dude's head.

But he failed to do this, so he made another rush for him.

"Give it to him, Reggie!" cried Young Wild West.

Then the dude swung his grip with all his might and sent the desperado staggering.

"You saucy fellow!" he exclaimed.

The miners fairly howled with delight.

It was enough for them to see the tenderfoot strike the

bullying man, but the words he gave utterance to capped the climax.

Reggie now stepped back and dropped his grip.

He placed himself in a boxing attitude, for he evidently took it that the majority of the crowd was with him and that he would have fair play.

But Doc, the desperado, did not want to fight that way.

Enraged at having been struck by the tenderfoot, he grabbed for his revolver.

"Hold on there, you big bluffer!" said Young Wild West in his cool and easy way. "You just let go of that piece of hardware or something will happen to you."

The young deadshot jerked a revolver from his right side in a twinkling, and as the ruffian looked at him he found the black muzzle staring him straight in the face.

Instantly his hand let go the gun.

This had no sooner happened than Wild dropped his weapon back into the holster.

"Now, then," said he, "you said when you finished with the dude you would pay a little attention to me. Are you ready?"

The desperado's face was dark with passion, but there was something in the manner of the boy before him that caused him to hesitate.

"What right have you got to interfere in this business?" he demanded, after a pause.

"The right of fair play," was the calm retort. "I asked you in a nice sort of way not to interfere with the tenderfoot, because the young lady with him was so badly frightened. You refused to do it, so you have got to take your medicine. Now, then, if you are willing to fight the dude with your fists, go ahead. I have an idea that he can thrash you in short order, and you are deserving of it, too, I think. What are you going to do about it?"

At this juncture a rough looking fellow, who had run across the street, called out:

"Sail into him, Doc. Knock ther daylights out of ther young galoot."

"You shet up, you measly coyote."

It was Cheyenne Charlie who spoke now, and his dark eyes flashed in a dangerous manner as the words came from his lips.

The scout was always ready for a scrimmage, and quickly dropping from his horse he walked toward the newcomer in a way that was surely menacing.

Doc's friend immediately reached for his gun.

Cheyenne Charlie did the same, and he succeeded in getting his out the fraction of a second quicker.

Crack!

The scout's weapon spoke sharply, and uttering a howl of pain the man let go his revolver and began shaking his hand as though he had received an electric shock.

"Pick up your gun, if yer dare ter!" Charlie cried, for he was now certainly angered. "I'll show yer how quick I kin made yer drop it ag'in."

But the ruffian made no attempt to stoop and pick up the weapon.

The bullet had grazed one of his fingers and the blood was freely flowing from it.

It was evident that he wanted no more of that.

"Hold on, partner!" he exclaimed. "You sartinly got



ther drop on me that time. Let it go. There ain't no use of us fightin'!"

"All right, you measly coyote. If yer want it that way, I'm satisfied."

Doc took all this in with a changing face.

He surely realized that it was better to quit, for he would stand no show if he tried to resume hostilities.

"Come on, Cai," he said. "I reckon this ain't no place for us. It seems that we've made a little mistake. We'll go over to Jerry's an' liquor up, an' then maybe we'll do better next time."

"Pick up your gun!" called out Young Wild West as the two ruffians started to walk across the street to a saloon, which had a sign across the front declaring it to be "Jerry's Joint."

The man turned and did so, and then with the jeers of the crowd ringing in their ears, the two hurriedly left the scene.

"How can I—aw—thank you, young fellow?" said Reggie, the dude, as he turned and grasped our hero by the hand. "I would never have dared to—aw—fight that fellow if you hadn't given me the encouragement. I feel sure that I could whip him if he did not use a pistol or knife, for I was quite a boxer while at—aw—college."

"I think you could, too, Reggie," Wild answered, with a smile as he shook the young man's hand. "You may know all about fighting with your fists, but I reckon you need a teacher to make you acquainted with the way they do it out here. If you are going to stay here for a day or two I might be able to give you a few lessons."

"Thank you; I will gladly accept your kind offer. Will you—aw—kindly tell me your name?"

"Young Wild West is my name."

"Oh! A rather fitting name, when the surroundings are taken into consideration. But I suppose it is but a nickname."

"No. That is the only name I ever knew."

"Is that so?"

The tenderfoot looked surprised.

"Yes, but it would take too long to tell you how I came by that name. Now, then, suppose you tell me your name. I heard you called Reggie, so I took the liberty of addressing you that way myself."

"Reginald Montrose is my name, thank you. I am a native of—aw—Boston. Permit me to introduce you to my—aw—wife, Young Wild West."

Wild shook hands with her in true Western fashion, and the young lady blushed to the roots of her hair.

Then the young deadshot quickly picked up the grip and placed it in the hand of the dude.

"I reckon you had better go inside now and try to make yourself at home," he said, smilingly.

The two took the hint, and soon disappeared from view.

Then it was that Rad Hickey, the mayor, waved his hat over his head and proposed three cheers for Young Wild West.

It is hardly necessary to state that nearly every man in the crowd joined in the cheering.

But this was nothing new for Young Wild West and his friends, so they paid little attention to it.

What they wanted to do just now was to find a place

to pitch their camp for the night, for they had traveled a long distance that day and were rather tired and hungry.

"Say, Mr. Mayor," said the young deadshot, when silence was restored, "I reckon you won't have any objections if we find a place around here to put up our tents for the night, will you?"

"Sartin, I won't," was the quick reply. "No one won't have no 'jections to that. If they do, they'll be sorry for it, I know. You jest pick out any spot yer want, Young Wild West. You're welcome in this here camp, an' so is all your friends."

"Much obliged to you, Mr. Mayor."

Our friends now rode down the street a short distance and turned to the right upon an open piece of ground and soon came to a halt near a running brook.

"I reckon this will be all right," said Wild. "Now, then, you two heathens get a hustle on you."

Five minutes later active preparations in putting the camp in shape were under way.

## CHAPTER II.

### DRAW POKER AT THE SEVEN UP HOTEL.

The two Chinamen had a systematic way of putting up and taking down the tents, and it was not very long before they had finished this part of their work.

While they were doing this Young Wild West and his partners saw to the horses, while the girls assisted in straightening things up about the camp.

Hop quickly gathered up some dry twigs and started a fire, and then it was not long before Wing, who acted as the cook for the party, had the coffee pot hanging over the blaze.

Then he sorted over the stock of game that had been shot the day before, and soon prepared some venison steaks and partridges for broiling.

He did not put them on the fire right away, however, for he had something else to do before that.

He quickly got at work and stirred up a batch of corn meal, flour and other ingredients that are used to make delicious corn muffins.

He made up about two dozen of them and placed them in an iron pan.

Then the pan was covered by one that was nearly like it, and raking some of the coals aside he placed it upon them and pulled more coals over the top.

This done, he proceeded to broil the partridges.

So clever was the Chinaman at his business, that he managed to have everything done at about the same time, which was not more than twenty minutes from the time the corn muffins had been put upon the fire.

The scout's wife lent her assistance, and soon the meal was ready.

As Young Wild West and his friends had been in the saddle since one o'clock that day it was not strange that they should be rather hungry.

But they all had good appetites, whether they rode far in a day or not.

The fresh mountain air and the exercise they took had a lot to do with this, no doubt.



By the time supper was over the sun had disappeared in the west and it was rapidly getting dark.

The shanties of the mining camp were now lighted up and the scene was certainly a striking one.

It was a big change from being in some wild part of the mountain range.

But our friends were used to all phases of life in the Wild West, so it had no particular charm for them.

The only way to make them appreciate it would be for them to leave such scenes, and then come back to them after a while.

Supper being over, Hop, who was called the handy man, quickly saw that the horses were placed where they could find plenty to eat during the night, and then his work was done.

Right here we may as well say that though Hop looked to be just a plain, ordinary Chinaman, he was something more than that.

The fact was that he was a very clever sleight-of-hand performer, an expert card sharp, loved practical joking, and had a fondness for whisky which he called "tangle-foot."

His work done, he now decided to pay a visit to one of the places where liquor was sold.

He did not ask Young Wild West if he could go, for he was afraid he might receive a negative reply, so he watched his chance and quietly slipped away.

Keeping in the shadow of some trees he went on around to the rear of the Seven Up Hotel, where the dude and his bride were stopping.

Hop would have gone over to Jerry's Joint, but it was easier for him to disappear from the camp by taking the other direction.

The Chinaman went into the room that was used for those who wanted to sit down, for cards, or bucking the tiger, for there was a faro layout there.

It would have been a poor hotel indeed in that part of the country that did not have some kind of a gambling apparatus attached to it.

Drinking and gambling is about the only pastime that miners have, and the majority of them take every advantage of the opportunity.

There were probably a dozen miners in this room, and when the Chinaman came in he became the center of attraction right away.

Not that Chinamen were strangers in that part of the country, for there were plenty of them, but it happened that there were none at Glimmer until Hop and Wing arrived there that afternoon.

"Here comes one of Young Wild West's heathens," said a miner, a broad grin on his face. "He looks like an innocent duck, don't he, boys?"

"Lat light, my flend," spoke up Hop, smiling blandly at him. "Me velly muchee innocent, so be. Me allee samee go to Sunday school in Flisco. Me goodee Chinee."

"I'll bet yer are," was the reply, and then a laugh went up.

Hop quickly passed on into the bar room of the shanty hotel.

This place was pretty well filled, and when he saw Reginald Montrose, the tenderfoot, standing at the bar in con-

versation with the proprietor, he bowed low to him and said:

"Velly nicee evening, Leggie."

"Well, well!" exclaimed the dude, astonished at the bold manner of the Chinaman. "What do you think of that, Mr. Hunt? I never saw a—aw—Chinaman with such a familiar way before. He is really amusing, isn't he?"

"A putty fresh heathen, I should say," Hunt answered, shrugging his shoulders. "But I suppose he's all right. He's one of Young Wild West's party, so he must be. Ther mayor says as how Young Wild West is all right, an' all them what's with him must be, too, or he wouldn't be with 'em."

Then he turned to Hop and added:

"I reckon you ain't as innocent as you look, heathen. What's ther matter with yer, anyhow?"

"Me gottee velly muchee painee, so be," and Hop at once bent over and put on an expression of agony. "Me wantee lillie tanglefoot velly quickee."

"Well, just look at that, Mr. Hunt!" exclaimed Reggie. "I really—aw—believe the fellow is suffering with a pain. Give him something to drink right away, please."

"Sartin, if you say so, Mr. Montrose," and the proprietor quickly put out a bottle and glass for Hop.

Then it was that the Chinaman's suffering instantly ceased.

His face became wreathed in smiles, and he quickly poured out his drink and swallowed it.

"Lat makee me feel allee light, so be. Thank you, Leggie. You velly nicee Melican man."

"You're welcome," and the dude smiled, for he rather appreciated the free and easy way of the Chinaman, now that he had become better acquainted with him.

Hop now looked around at the grinning faces of the miners.

"Lis um velly nicee clowd, so be," he observed, addressing no one in particular, but making a sweep with his hand.

"You can bet your life on that, heathen," one of them quickly answered. "But what is your handle?"

"Me no gottee handle," Hop declared, innocently. "Nobody allee samee cally me likee um glip. Me ride um cayuse. Me velly smartee Chinee."

This caused a laugh, as might be supposed, and the crowd now began to realize that they had struck a very funny Chinaman indeed.

"Well, what's your name, then?" the questioner spoke up.

"Me name Hop Wah, come flom China."

"Hop Wah, eh? Well, that name sounds all right. Are you ther cook for Young Wild West an' his friends?"

Hop shook his head in the negative.

"Me no cook," he declared, "me allee samee tlua blue sport. Me likee play dlaw poken. Lide 'lound with Young Wild West for fun, so be."

Again there was a laugh.

While it was not strange that a Chinaman should play draw poker, there was hardly anyone there who thought that Hop knew much about the game.

There were plenty of miners there who did understand



it, however, and they were always eager to play, especially if they could rope in a stranger.

It happened that Reggie's wife was getting along nicely in the company of the hotel proprietor's wife and daughter, and when he proposed that they play a game of poker and take the Chinaman in, there was a unanimous cry of assent.

"I—aw—played the great American game considerable while at college, you know," he drawled. "But I—aw—don't play for very high stakes. I do it just for the pleasure, there is in it and to pass away the time, you know."

"Me allee samee likee lat, too, Leggie," Hop said. "Me likee play to pass away um timee. Me velly smartee Chinnee."

"It takes money to play draw poker," observed one of the men, who was more than anxious to get into a game. "How much have yer got, heathen?"

"Me gottee about thousand dollee, so be," was the reply. "Me makee million dollee one night when me play um empelor in China. He gettee so mad when I win allee him money he got in um palace lat he makee me come to Melica velly muchee quickee. Me no care. Me allee samee thue blue spert. Hip hi! Hoolay! Me um bully boy with um glasse eye! Me no care if um school keepe or not. Hip hi! Allee samee Melican man. Hoolay!"

Then he danced about the room for a minute or two, while those present roared with laughter.

"He is—aw—very amusing, isn't he, Mr. Hunt?" the tenderfoot asked.

"Somethin' like that, I reckon," was the proprietor's reply. "I must say that I never seen a heathen act like that afore."

Those who were anxious to sit in the game of poker now pushed their way into the rear room.

As the dude and Hop were to play all of them, of course, could not get in.

"Me likee fivee handee gamee, so be," declared Hop, as he took a seat at one of the tables.

"That's right, heathen," a big miner answered, as he dropped into a chair opposite. "You're jest like me on that. Five is enough in one game, though I s'pose we could make it six-handed."

"Any way suits me," declared Reginald Montrose, as he took a chair that one of the men was kind enough to place in position for him. "I am only going to do this to pass an hour away, while my—aw—wife is enjoying the company of Mrs. Hunt and her daughter in the—aw—parlor."

Reggie still wore his straw hat, though he had discarded the pair of opera glasses that had hung over his shoulder with a strap at the hotel.

In his neat-fitting tailor-made suit and new straw hat the young man certainly looked much out of place in that gathering.

But he did not seem to mind it much, for he had no doubt found out by this time that the miners, though they were very rough in their ways, were not bad fellows at all.

After a good-natured argument it was decided that the game should be six-handed.

"Suppose we—aw—make it a quarter ante and a dollar limit," suggested the dude, looking at those sitting about the table.

"Ha, ha, ha!" laughed the big miner, who was sitting opposite Hop. "What do you want a limit for? That ain't no way to play poker."

"Well, I—aw—only suggested that," and Reggie shrugged his shoulders. "It really—aw—makes no difference to me."

"No limit, then," spoke up one of the others. "Let her go. If a man's got a good hand he'll play it for all it's worth. If he ain't got nothin' to go in with he kin drop out, that's all."

"Lat light," and Hop nodded, and smiled sweetly at the speaker. "You allee samee know, my fiend."

A new deck of cards and a box of red, white and blue chips were brought to the table by the proprietor, who acted as banker, and proceeded to sell the chips.

Hop laid down five hundred dollars and said he wanted that many chips.

This was startling to the players, as well as the lookers on.

"See here!" spoke up the dude, placing his hand upon the Chinaman's arm, "I don't—aw—propose to play any longer than an hour. It is not necessary to buy so many chips."

"Lat allee light, Misler Leggie," the Chinaman answered, smilingly. "You buy fivee hundled dollee worth of um chips, and maybe you only play ten, fifteen minutes, so be. Maybe you gettee pletty goodee hand, and somebody gettee bettee hand. Len you lose velly muchee quickee."

"That is true, Hop. But I think I will—aw—take a hundred dollars worth to start with."

"That will be enough for me, I reckon," spoke up the big man in the red shirt, whose name, by the way, was Jenkins.

"Allee light," and Hop nodded.

The other three miners each took two hundred dollars' worth apiece, and the proprietor smiled as he accepted the money for them.

As he got a certain percentage, the more chips he sold the better it was for him.

Jenkins shuffled the cards and the cut for deal was made.

It happened that Reggie won, and as he was sitting on the right of Hop, it would be the Chinaman's turn to deal next.

It happened that all four of the miners believed in cheating if they could do so without being detected.

Just what Reggie's idea was in that line it is hard to tell. But Hop could not play a square game, in fact.

Being a sleight-of-hand performer, it was easy for him to handle the cards the way he wanted to, and he could do things that some of the best of the card sharps could not begin to do.

The dude soon showed that he knew how to handle the cards, and after the cut had been made he dealt them around in rapid succession.

Hop had put up five dollars' worth of chips as the ante,



and when he picked up his cards he found himself the possessor of a pair of deuces.

He did not expect to win the first pot, so when it came time to draw he took three cards.

He did not better his hand any, but he promptly bet ten dollars.

The man next to him did not happen to have anything worth while, so he dropped out.

The next man met the ten-dollar raise and went ten better.

Then the miner in the red shirt studied a moment and raised it ten more.

The man next to him shook his head and threw down his cards.

Reggie smiled serenely and made it ten more.

Then Hop made the call.

"Me allee samee gottee um pair of deuces!" he exclaimed as though he really thought he was the winner.

"Well, I happen to have three queens," the dude answered.

Then everyone laughed, while Hop looked surprised.

"Lat allee light," he said. "Maybe me havee better luck um next timee."

"Maybe yer will, heathen," Jenkins observed. "Yer sartainly had a putty good hand. A pair of deuces! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Lat allee light," and Hop looked at him earnestly. "Me allee samee win um thousand dollee with um pair of deuces one timee. Me allee samee bluffee."

The miners looked at each other and winked.

It was evident that they thought the Chinaman was very innocent about the game.

But while Hop was talking he was sorting over the cards, and when he got through shuffling them he had them fixed just as he wanted them.

He meant to give each of the players what they would outsider a very good hand, and of course have the winning hand himself.

He dealt them around a little awkwardly, and when he picked up his own hand he found himself the possessor of four aces and the nine of diamonds.

The man next to him was not a little surprised to see that he had four tens cold.

The third player held four jacks.

Jenkins, though surprised, did not show by word or look that he had been lucky enough to get four queens.

The miner next to him found himself in possession of four treys, while Reggie held four kings.

They had all been watching the Chinaman as he dealt, and not one of them dreamed of such a thing as any crookedness about it.

Still, the clever Chineese had worked his game upon them, and he knew exactly what each man had in his hand.

The draw was made, some standing pat and others taking one card.

Hop stood pat, and declared that he had a "velly goodee hand."

Then the betting began.

Everyone stayed in, and when it had gone around four times there was about three hundred dollars on the table.

When it came to the dude again he called for more

chips, taking two hundred, for he was now beginning to get more interested in the game.

He raised it a hundred, and then Hop went it a hundred better.

The miners then bet more chips, and the result was that it was not long before a thousand dollars was represented upon the table.

It was just then that Young Wild West and Cheyenne Charlie came in and joined the crowd of spectators that were gathered about the table.

The two had left the camp to take a look around, and the first place they stopped at was the Seven Up Hotel.

Of course, they had missed Hop, and they had guessed that they would either find him at this place or the saloon.

"Good evening, gentlemen," said Wild, as he nodded to those about the table. "A pretty stiff game you are playing, I reckon."

"Good evening, Young Wild West," the dude answered, and then he quickly added: "Yes, this is a much swifter game than I am in the—aw—habit of playing. I just sat down to pass away an hour, you know."

Hop showed signs of uneasiness now, for he knew very well that Wild would not permit him to keep the money if he won it.

But he decided to show his opponents that he knew considerably more about the game of draw poker than they did, so the next time it came his turn he raised it two hundred.

The man who held the four treys decided that he had gone far enough, so he called him.

The rest fell in line, and then Reggie said:

"What have you got, Hop?"

"Me allee samee gottee four lillie aces," was the bland reply, and they were thrown upon the table before the eyes of all.

"Gracious!" exclaimed the dude, looking surprised; "and I have four kings, too."

The rest were not slow in showing what they had, and then all eyes were turned upon the smiling Chinaman.

"Gentlemen," said Young Wild West, "I suppose you are a little bit surprised, but I want to tell you that Hop knows a great deal more about draw poker than the average person does or ever will know. He has fleeced you, that's all. Hop, just give them back their chips. You can't play a square game, and you know it."

"Allee light, Mislter Wild," was the meek reply, and then Hop spread out the chips and proceeded to count as many as belonged to him.

"I object to that, Young Wild West," spoke up the tenderfoot, rising from the table. "No one caught the Chinaman cheating, so the money belongs to him."

"No, it doesn't" was the reply. "I don't want him to fleece honest people out of their money, not while he is in our employ, anyhow."

After a little persuasion the dude consented to do as our hero said, and the result was that all got back their chips.

The affair had just been settled nicely when a yell sounded from the bar room, followed by the sounds of scuffling feet.



Then two or three revolver shots rang out in quick succession, and the voice of Doc, the desperado, called out:

"Clear ther track! We're comin' to clean out Young Wild West an' ther dude. Them that don't want ter git shot had better sneak out of sight in a hurry. Wow, wow!"

Wild heard what was said plainly, as did everyone in the place.

Whipping out his revolver he leaped to the door and came face to face with the desperado.

"Drop that gun!" he shouted. "You big bluffer, if you wait another second I'll put a hole through you!"

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE SECRET CELLAR.

When Young Wild West called the desperado a bluffer he certainly hit the mark.

Though he had been filling up on whiskey, and had half a dozen rough-looking men at his back, Doc dropped his revolver as quickly as though it had been knocked from his hand.

His whole manner changed, too.

From being a veritable fire-eater he had suddenly become as meek as a lamb.

"Hold on, Young Wild West!" he called out, as the muzzle of our hero's revolver was thrust to within an inch or two of his nose. "Don't shoot. I was only havin' a little fun."

Wild made no reply.

He was really paying more attention to those who had entered the shanty hotel with the ruffian than he was to Doc himself.

They all had guns in their hands, and there was no telling but that they might begin firing.

With his left hand he quickly drew his other revolver, and then pushing the desperado away from him with the muzzle of the other he called out:

"Hands up, every one of you!"

Cheyenne Charlie was right on the spot in a twinkling.

He had pulled both his guns, and waving them before the face of the bunch of villains, he shouted:

"Send for ther undertaker, won't somebody, please? He will be needed here in jest about ten seconds. Whoop-ee, whoop-ee! Wow, wow! Yip, yip, yip!"

Up went the hands of the desperado's companions.

It was evident that they had not figured on anything like that happening.

A silence that was almost deathly now came over the bar room, as well as the room adjoining it.

Those who could not get through the doorway to witness the sight went outside and came around to the front.

Hop Wah was one of them.

As he came in he began dancing about in a fantastic way, singing in Chinese at the top of his voice.

When he got to the spot where Doc's revolver lay upon the floor he stooped and picked it up.

"You wantee lis?" he asked, innocently, as he placed his finger upon the trigger and made out he was handing it to the man. "You allee samee dloppee."

"Point that some other way, heathen," came the startled retort. "It might go off."

"Lat allee light," answered Hop, and then he pointed the muzzle toward the floor and pulled the trigger.

Crack!

A bullet came dangerously close to one of the villain's toes, and he uttered an involuntary yell and leaped into the air.

Crack!

Hop fired again.

This time the bullet fairly grazed the heel of Doc's boot and sent a shock through him.

"Stop it, stop it!" he shouted, in terror. "I surrender!"

Crack!

Hop fired again.

This time the bullet came pretty close to one of the others.

"Keep it up, you heathen galoot!" called out Cheyenne Charlie, and then he began firing at the floor.

The result was that the room was quickly filled with smoke, and taking advantage of this, the ruffians got down upon their hands and knees and crept outside, since the door was wide open.

The desperado, as he was called, happened to be one of the first to make his escape, and without stopping to see how his companions made out, he made a bee-line for the saloon, which was only a short distance away, at the other side of the sandy street that ran through the heart of the little collection of shanties that made up the mining camp. He never turned his head once, but dashed into the place, his face pale with fear.

"Give me some of your best whiskey!" he called out, hoarsely, to the proprietor of the place, who happened to be behind the little bar himself.

"What's ther matter, Doc?" the man asked, looking surprised. "Yer act as though you had seen a ghost."

"I come near gittin' shot, that's all," was the reply. "Hurry up. Give me a drink."

"There yer are, Doc. Go ahead; help yourself."

The desperado caused the glass to run over in his excitement, but when he had swallowed the fiery fluid he grew more calm.

It was just then that the others came into the place, and though a couple of them had got out of the shanty hotel first, he had beaten them to Jerry's Joint.

The proprietor of the saloon was more amazed than ever.

"Doc," said he, when the last man came inside, "I reckon yer didn't make out very well. Yer said yer was goin' over to ther Seven Up to clean out Young Wild West an' that tenderfoot dude. It sorter looks as though yer all got chased out."

"We didn't exactly git chased out, Jerry," answered Cal Jenks, who was known to be a partner of the desperado. "Ther shootin' in there made jest enough smoke for us to light out without bein' seen, an' you kin bet we wasn't long in takin' ther chance."

"Well, I'll be blamed!"

Jerry looked at Doc in a way that told how amazed he really was.

"It can't be helped, Jerry," answered the desperado.



shrugging his shoulders. "I reckon we made a little too much noise in goin' in. Ther boy was right there with a gun, an' afore I knowed it it was poked square under my nose. There was only one thing for me to do, an' that was to give in. I give in, too, Jerry; an' you kin bet your life that anyone else in my place would have done it, too. That boy is ther coolest hand I ever sot eyes on. That tall galoot they call Cheyenne Charlie is almost as bad, too. But to make it all ther worse, one of ther heathens what struck ther camp with Young Wild West an' his gang got hold of my gun, which I'd dropped on ther floor, an' he begun shootin' it around my feet. I tell yer, Jerry, it was high time to git out."

"Maybe it was," admitted the proprietor of the saloon, nodding his head. "But I didn't think you fellers was ther kind what would stand all that foolin'."

"There wasn't any foolin' about it," declared Jenks, positively. "It was real. Why, if one of us had pulled a trigger ther whole lot of us would have went down in a heap. I know that jest as much as if it had happened."

"By jingo!" the saloon keeper exclaimed. "I ain't seen this boy yet. I reckon I'll have a look at him in ther mornin'. It ain't likely they'll go away very early."

"It ain't likely he'll go away at all," declared Doc, his eyes flashing, for he had now recovered from his fright and appeared to be in his old form again. "I'll make it a point to fill him full of lead, so he'll find a restin' place in our little cemetery on ther side of ther hill. There ain't no man or boy as kin ever git away alive after doin' what he's done to me. I didn't mean no harm to ther tenderfoot, an' since Young Wild West took it up for him, an' done what he jest done to me, I've got to have my revenge. I'm Doc, ther desperado, an' don't yer forgit it. I'm goin' ter keep up my reputation or die tryin' to do it. Wow! Give us another drink, Jerry."

"Right yer are, Doc," was the reply, and soon the seven villains, for villains they were, beyond the shadow of a doubt, were imbibing the amber-colored fluid that was called whiskey.

Jerry seemed to sympathize with them, and there was nothing strange about this, since he was anything but an honest man.

His resort was one that had been patronized by the worst element of the mining camp since it had started, though many of the honest class came in occasionally.

When Jerry had put up the shanty he had figured on making money in more ways than one there.

It had been built over a small cave, which he had discovered and kept concealed by placing a big slab of rock over the opening.

Even the men who assisted in erecting the shanty were not aware of the existence of the cave, and it was only a few who did know about it.

The few consisted of Doc and the six men who had gone with him to the hotel for the purpose of cleaning out Young Wild West and the dude.

The fact was that they had banded themselves together with Jerry as their leader and had followed the profession of robbers and thugs whenever they had the chance to gain money in that way.

The cave under the building was their secret headquarters, though they seldom visited it.

More than one unsuspecting stranger had been dropped through the trap-door in the back room into this cave, and he had never seen the light of day again.

If such a person happened to be missed by those who knew nothing of what was going on it was always given out that he had left the camp during the night, evidently being afraid to stay there any longer.

Jerry soon turned the bar over to his assistant, who was an innocent appearing young man, who had struck the job when the saloon first opened.

Really he was but a half-witted fellow, but he knew how to make change, and was pretty quick in dealing out the liquor and cigars that were sold there.

When he got outside the bar the proprietor treated the seven ruffians to cigars.

Then he looked at Doc and said, in a low tone of voice:

"S'pose we go downstairs an' talk this thing over? Maybe there'll be a chance for us to make a good haul."

"Jest what I was thinkin'," the desperado replied. "Go on. We'll foller, one at a time. It won't do for us to all go at once, yer know."

The room was pretty well filled, and many were playing cards, while the roulette wheel was being spun in one corner.

No one seemed to pay any particular attention to the ruffians, so Jerry coolly went through into the little rear room.

A lamp was burning, but there was no one there.

"Come in here, boys, an' we'll have a little drink," he called out, so everyone could hear him. "Johnny, fetch in a bottle an' some glasses."

"All right, boss," the young man behind the bar answered, and in a very few minutes they were all gathered about the one table that was in the corner of the room.

"I thought it would be best to do it this way," Jerry explained. "Now then, I'll shut ther door, an' we'll all go down."

He closed the door and locked it, and then he went to the center of the room and lifted the trap-door, which was concealed by an old piece of carpet.

A rough flight of steps was disclosed, and lifting a lantern from somewhere beneath the floor he quickly lighted it with a match and then started to descend.

He had scarcely got down when Doc followed him, and then the rest went down also.

Though he had locked the door that opened into the bar room, Jerry had not thought of the one that opened from the rear of the building.

The last of the villains had scarcely disappeared when this door opened softly, and in stepped Hop Wah, Young Wild West's clever Chinese.

Hop had a way of entering saloons by the rear entrance sometimes, and it happened that he had decided to pay a visit to Jerry's Joint, and he went around to the rear, thinking, no doubt, it would be better for him to do so, since he knew very well that the desperado and his friends were at the place.



It happened that the Chinaman was just in time to see the last man disappear through the trap-door.

It was closed before he hardly got in, so he stood still and nodded his head.

"Lat velly funny, so be," he muttered, under his breath. "Um shanty allee samee gottee um cellar under um. Whattee mattee?"

Though he thought somewhat strange of this, Hop did not believe just then that there was anything particularly wrong about it.

He looked around the room, and seeing a whiskey barrel in a corner, a spirit of mischief came over him.

"Me makee um Melican mans stay down lere lillee while, so be," he thought.

Then he stepped cautiously to the barrel and pushed it over a little.

It was probably half full, and was somewhat heavy.

But Hop knew how to handle a barrel, so he carefully rolled it over until he got it upon the trap-door.

He had taken notice that the door opened from above, so with the barrel upon it, it would be a rather difficult task for anyone below to raise it without using considerable force.

A grin showed on the yellow face of the Chinaman as he surveyed his work.

"Now len," said he, to himself, "if ley no tly gittee outee pletty soonee me makee believe um shanty on fire. Len me havee lillee laugh, so be. Maybe one, two, thlee Melican mans down in um cellar."

He now stepped to the door that opened into the bar room, and finding it locked, he coolly turned the key and swung it open.

He took a look, and finding that the desperado and his gang were not there, he walked boldly out and took his station before the bar.

"Me havee lillee dlink of tanglefoot," he said to Johnny as the bartender was called.

"Got ther money?" came the query, while Johnny looked at him in a sort of simple way.

"Me gottee plenty money, so be," and then Hop showed him a silver dollar.

"All right. You kin have ther tanglefoot, then."

Hop got his drink, and then he stepped back a little distance from the bar and said:

"You allee samee open you mouth and catchee um dollee. If you catchee you keepee um change, so be."

It happened that the bartender was a poorly paid man, and he immediately accepted the proposition of the Chinaman.

"All right," he said, and then opened wide his mouth and leaned forward.

Hop gave the dollar a toss and it quickly disappeared. But it did not go into Johnny's mouth, however.

Where it had gone was a mystery to him.

But the fact was that an elastic string was attached to it and it simply slipped up the clever Chinaman's sleeve.

"Whattee you swallee um dollee for?" Hop asked, looking at the fellow in surprise. "Now len, you no gittee um change."

"I didn't swaller it," declared the simple-minded fellow, looking alarmed. "Did it go down my throat?"

"Lat light," and the Chinaman shook his head, as though he did not know what the consequence might be.

Just how far the Chinaman would have gone with his joke is hard to tell, but just then who should enter the place but Wild, Charlie and Reggie, the dude.

Our hero had invited Reggie to come with them to Jerry's Joint, just to show the desperado and his gang that they were not afraid of them.

"Hello, Hop!" the dude called out, as he smiled at the Chinaman. "What are you up to now?"

"Me just buy um lillee dlink of tanglefoot," was the reply. "You havee sometling, Misler Leggie?"

"No, thanks. I only take two drinks of brandy a day. I can't drink with you now, Hop."

Meanwhile Wild and Charlie had been looking about the room for the ruffians.

Failing to find them there, our hero turned to the bartender and said:

"Where is Doc, the desperado?"

"He went out a little while ago, young feller," was the reply.

As he looked toward the rear door when he said this it occurred to Hop right away that probably he had been the man he had seen disappearing through the trap-door.

He quickly called Wild aside and told him all he had seen as he came in from the back way.

"Ah!" exclaimed our hero. "So they have a cellar underneath this place, have they? Well, that is pretty good. Generally when you find a cellar beneath a shanty saloon in a mining camp there is something going on beside the mere selling of liquor and gambling."

"Lat light, Misler Wild. Me know lat velly muchee. Maybe me bettee makee believe blowee up um shanty. Len you see some fun, so be. Me put um barrel of tanglefoot on top of um tlap-door, and when um Melican man tly gettee outee he gettee velly muchee scare. Velly muchee fun, Misler Wild."

"All right, go ahead, Hop," and our hero smiled as he thought of what was likely to happen.

The clever Chinese lost no time in carrying out his plan.

But as he turned to go into the back room the bartender called out to him and tried to make him understand that he had not swallowed the dollar he had tossed to him.

Wild knew right away that Hop had fleeced the man out of the price of a drink, so he told him to pay him and have done with it.

"Allee light, Misler Wild," and Hop was not long in giving Johnny the amount that was coming to him.

Then he walked into the back room, followed by Wild, Charlie and the dude.

There were several cracks in the floor, but this made no difference to the Chinaman just then.

He quickly produced a can of gun powder and poured some of it near the spot where the barrel rested.

Then he sprinkled a train that reached to the door of the bar room.

Hop had a slick way of doing things, and so quickly did he carry out his plans that no one was aware of what was up.

Our hero and his companions now came into the bar



room again, and Hop followed them, shutting the door behind him.

Then, without waiting another minute, the clever Chinaman calmly lighted a cigar and dropped the match upon the powder that ran into the room under the door.

There was a sharp hiss, and then a muffled report sounded which shook the building upon its foundation.

#### CHAPTER IV.

##### AFTER THE EXPLOSION.

The ladder the eight villains descended when they went down into the cave that was beneath the shanty saloon was probably fifteen feet in length.

It passed straight through the opening of the cave, which was not more than five or six feet long, and probably three feet in width.

The place was not exactly suited for holding a meeting, for it was damp there, while the sounds of running water could be heard.

Air was admitted to it from somewhere, too, and as the light of the lantern flashed through the darkness some cracks in the rock and earth showed where this came from.

There was an opening somewhere that extended many feet to the outside, but was not nearly large enough to enter by that way.

Some boxes and barrels were around the rocky floor, as well as a rough table, and when Jerry placed a lantern upon the ladder they all sat down.

"Now I guess we kin talk all we want to," said Doc, nodding his head in a satisfied way. "There's three or four feet of earth an' rock between us an' the floor of the shanty, so I reckon we can't be heard."

"That's right, Doc," Jerry answered. "This place is as safe as though we was a hundred miles from here. Now then, I'll tell yer what I think oughter be done. In ther first place, you want to git revenge on ther boy you call Young Wild West. That will be easy enough ter do, of course; but afore yer do this I think it would be better to find out if they've got any money with 'em."

"Most likely they have," spoke up Cal Jenks. "By ther looks of 'em they must have plenty, for ther rigs they wear sartinly cost somethin'. Ther horses they've got is about as fine as yer could see in a month's travel, too."

"Well, s'pose you wait a little while afore you try to git your revenge upon ther boy," said the keeper of the saloon.

"All right," the desperado answered. "I'm willin' to do that, if there's anything to be made by it."

"Well, there oughter be somethin' to be made by it. How about ther dude? He looks as though he oughter have plenty of money. Didn't I hear some one say that he's jest been gittin' married, an' that he brought his bride here, jest to see ther sights of a minin' camp?"

"It was me what said that," Jenks spoke up. "But I don't know if I'm exactly right about what he come here for. I heard ther miners talkin' about ther gal bein' his wife, that's all."

"Well, if he's on a weddin' trip it are putty sure that he must have money to pay his way."

"That's right," admitted Doc.

"I don't know as there's any use of puttin' ther foolish galoot out of ther way, though," went on Jerry, shaking his head. "He's harmless enough, an' if he's jest been gittin' married it would be a sorter shame to cut short his life. I don't think yer oughter do anything to him, Doc."

"Well, I ain't got nothin' particular ag'in him," answered the desperado. "It sorter made me mad when he hit me with that grip of his, though. I believe ther dude kin fight."

"Well, maybe he kin—with his fists. But let him live. What we want is his money. As far as Young Wild West an' his pards is concerned, though, I s'pose they oughter be put out of ther way, by all means. If they ain't they'll be apt to make trouble for us here in Glimmer."

"You kin bet your life they will," spoke up one of the others. "That's a game Young Wild West an' his pards always works. They're awful down on them as does a crooked business, an' they've got ther name of havin' hunted down more than one band of outlaws an' road agents. It wouldn't do for 'em to find out what we're up to here. They must be put out of ther way, sartain."

"You kin bet your life that Young Wild West will git his medicine, an' from me, too," declared Doc, his eyes flashing.

"You said that afore you left here to go over to ther Seven Up Hotel to-night, Doc," remarked the saloon keeper with a grin.

"I know I did," was the reply. "But things didn't go my way. It's all right, though. Ther next time I'll go at it a little different. I won't let ther boy know I'm comin'."

"I reckon that will be best," said Jenks, giving a nod of approval.

Jerry thought a minutes and then said:

"Well, I s'pose ther first thing for us to do is to find out whether they've got any money or not. That hadn't oughter be a very hard matter, 'cause one of us kin make some kind of a proposition to bet a pile of money, when we know we'd lose if we did bet. That generally causes a galoot to flash his roll. 'Most everybody likes to bet on a sure thing, you know. It's quite likely that Young Wild West will pay a visit to my place, 'cause if he's anything like you say he is, he wouldn't be a bit afraid to do it. Probably he knows that you hang out here, Doc, an' since he made a fool of yer, he'll want to come around an' see how yer act."

"I s'pose so," Doc admitted, shaking his head, and gritting upon his teeth. "I know he made a fool of me, all right. But never mind. I'll git square."

The villains talked on a little longer, and then Jerry suggested that they go up into the saloon again.

"Jest leave it to me," he said, as he arose from his seat. "When Young Wild West comes in I'll ask him if he's ther champion deadshot. He'll say he is, of course. Then I'll ask him if he wants to bet a thousand dollars that there ain't a man in my place what kin beat him shootin'. If that don't make him show his money I'll miss my guess."

They all agreed with him, and then Jerry took the lantern and started for the ladder.

He had just reached the foot of it, when a muffled ex-



plosion sounded directly over his head and down came a cloud of dust, while smoke poured in upon them.

"What in thunder is that?" gasped the proprietor of the "Joint," his face turning pale.

"Somethin' has blowed up, I guess," one of the villains managed to find words to say.

"I should say there had," and Jerry quickly ascended the ladder.

He reached the trap-door and attempted to push it up, but it would not yield.

He tried again, but the result was the same.

"Boys!" he exclaimed, hoarsely, "somethin' has happened up there, an' now I can't git ther trap-door open. We're penned in here like rats in a trap. S'pose ther shanty's on fire?"

The words sounded ominous to his villainous companions, and for the space of a few seconds no one spoke a word.

Footsteps could be heard above their heads now, so they knew that somebody was in the room above them.

"Hello, hello!" called out Jerry, forgetful of the fact that he would disclose the secret cellar if someone opened the trap for him.

"Is anyone down there?" a voice asked.

"Yes, yes. Open that trap-door—quick," shouted Jerry.

Then they heard a jar above them, and the next minute the trap opened.

Jerry went up in a hurry, heartily glad to get out of the cave.

The first person he saw was a boy attired in a fancy hunting suit of buckskin.

It was Wild, of course.

After the explosion he decided to wait until those below shouted for help, and then let them out.

He did not know just how many there were under the shanty, but it was easy for him to guess that there were more than one.

Near our hero stood Cheyenne Charlie, the dude and Hop Wah.

The miners had all run out of the shanty, after the explosion, for they no doubt felt that the building was going to be wrecked.

It happened that Jerry had not seen our friends before, since he had been busy when they rode up to the hotel.

But he was not long in guessing that the boy who stood before him was Young Wild West.

"What happened up here, young feller?" he asked, trying his best to be perfectly cool, though he was still trembling from excitement and fear.

"Something exploded in this room, I reckon," Wild replied. "When we came in we found that whiskey barrel in the center of the room, while you were calling out directly under it. We just rolled the barrel over and found the trap-door. Come on out. I guess there's no danger now."

The last was said to those he could see below, for two of them were upon the ladder in plain sight.

The villains came up, one by one, Doc being the last to emerge from the opening.

By this time several of the miners had come back into

the place, and they were gathered about both doorways looking at the scene in wonder.

Where the trap-door led to none of them knew.

Jerry now closed the trap, and picked up the piece of carpet and spread it over the spot.

He looked about the room and saw evidences of the burned powder, but could not imagine just what had happened.

The desperado took care to keep at a safe distance from our friends, and when Jerry went out into the bar room he was close at his heels.

Puzzled and annoyed by what had happened, Jerry decided to treat the crowd, and thus make it appear that everything was all right, even if there was a trap-door in the floor of his back room.

"Come up, boys, an' have somethin' on ther house," he called out.

The invitation was promptly responded to, for even those of the miners who had been afraid to come in before now entered in a hurry.

Wild and his companions were keeping a watch on the men who had come up the ladder.

Our hero and the scout had noted their looks carefully, and it was a sure thing that they would know them again, no matter where they met them.

"A bad lot of galoots, Wild," whispered the scout, when he had sized them all up.

"That's right, Charlie," was the reply. "The desperado has certainly got a tough looking gang to back him up. The boss of the place is in with them, too. But don't say anything just now. I want to find out what they were doing in the cellar if I can. The chances are that they were doing some plotting, of course, and the fact that Doc was with them makes me think that the plotting was against me."

"Won't you fellers have somethin'?" Jerry called out just then, as he nodded to our friends.

"I'll have a cigar," Wild answered.

"So will I," Reggie Montrose spoke up.

"Me, too," chimed in the scout.

"Me allee samee takee lillee tanglefoot, so be," chirped Hop, as he pushed his way to the bar.

"All right, heathen," was the reply. "I reckon you're as welcome as anyone else. You're with Young Wild West, I see, an' anyone as is with him oughter be all right, from what I've heard of him."

Our hero smiled at this, for he knew quite well that the man did not mean a word of it.

But he accepted the cigar and quickly lighted it, for he occasionally smoked, though he did not make a habit of it.

The miners talked about the curious explosion, and many were the comments about it.

No one seemed to have the least idea as to how it had happened, or what had been the cause of it.

Finally one of them turned to the saloon keeper and said:

"Have yer got a cellar under your buildin', Jerry?"

"Yes, I've got a little cellar under there where I keeps my choice stock of liquors," was the reply. "I had ther boys down there helpin' me haul a barrel up that had



dropped between two rocks an' was wedged fast. We'd jest finished gittin' it loose when we heard that explosion. It must have rolled a barrel in ther other room right over the trap-door, an' that's why we couldn't git out. Funny thing about it, ain't it?"

"It is a rather queer thing, when you come to think of it," spoke up our hero in his cool and easy way. "So it took eight of you to move a barrel in your cellar, did it? It must have been a mighty big barrel, I reckon."

"Oh, ther barrel wasn't no bigger than any other barrel," Jerry retorted, quickly. "But it was wedged in a corner, and it took a whole lot of help to git it out."

"Oh, I see. You were very thoughtful to put a cellar under your shanty when you built it. I suppose it comes in quite handy, don't it?"

"You kin bet it does," Jerry answered.

"In more ways than one, I suppose," went on the boy, calmly.

"Oh, yes," was the reply. "There's lots of things that kin be stowed in a cellar that you can't put anywhere else."

"Yes, I suppose so. It would be a good place to stow the body of a man after you had killed and robbed him, I suppose."

Jerry's face turned pale at this remark, while the desperado and the rest of the villains acted as though they felt like getting out of the place in a hurry.

"I didn't mean that you would do anything like that," Wild hastened to say. "I just made the remark, because it struck me that such a thing could be done, you know."

"I suppose it could be done, all right," Jerry retorted, breathing a sigh of relief. "But I don't want yer to think that I'm ther sort of a man as would do anything like that. I run a saloon, I know, but I do things on ther square."

"Of course you do," and the boy acted as though there was no doubt about it.

It was not long before things were restored to their normal state in the shanty saloon.

Those who had been engaged in playing cards went back to the tables, while the man who had charge of the roulette outfit took his station and called out an invitation for those who felt like investing to come up and play.

Jerry had now quite recovered his composure, and thinking it was a good chance to find out if our hero had any money, he looked at him for a moment in silence and then said:

"Young Wild West, I heard someone say that you was ther champion deadshot of ther West. Is that so?"

"Well, I never gave myself the title," Wild replied, smiling at him. "I will admit I have done a lot of shooting, in matches and in other ways. I have practiced considerably, too, and the result is that I generally hit what I shoot at."

"Well, would you think there was a man in this room what could beat you shootin'?"

"There might be," the boy replied, wondering what the man was getting at.

"S'pose I was to offer to bet yer a thousand dollars that there was a man in this shanty what kin beat you shootin', what would yer say?"

"I'll bet yer a thousand there ain't a man in this shanty,

or in ther whole blame minin' camp, as kin beat Young Wild West shootin'," spoke up the scout, before Wild could make a reply.

To show that he meant business, Charlie produced the money, so all hands could see it.

"Well, I didn't say I wanted to bet," Jerry remarked, shaking his head. "I was only s'posin', yer know."

"You're a bluffer, you are," the scout declared angrily. "Put up your money, or shut up. I'll bet a thousand to a hundred that Young Wild West kin beat any galoot in Glimmer at shootin', either with a rifle or a gun. Who wants ter take me up?"

No one said a word.

"Pshaw!" exclaimed Charlie, in disgust, as he put his money back in his pocket. "You're a four-flusher from 'way back."

"That's all right," Jerry answered, shrugging his shoulders. "I didn't mean to make no bet. I jest wanted to find out if ther boy really was ther champion deadshot. I knowed if he, or anyone else would bet it would be proved that he was."

"Well," said Wild, a smile playing about his lips, "since there is no one who wants to make a bet, I'll show you how I can shoot, just for the fun of it. I have promised to give our friend, Reggie, the dude, a few lessons in the ways of the West, so I'll start right in now and instruct him how to shoot. I don't suppose you have any objections, boss?"

"Why, no, of course not," answered Jerry, though he trembled slightly, for he had no idea just what the boy meant to shoot at.

"All right, then; we'll proceed right away."

## CHAPTER V.

### THE DUDE GETS HIS FIRST LESSON.

Young Wild West looked about the room and after measuring up the interior he went outside.

He found that one end of the shanty rested against the face of a high bank of earth and rock.

"I reckon it's all right," he said, as he came inside again and nodded toward the end where there was no window. "If I shoot that way I won't be in any danger of killing anyone—unless," and he shot a glance at the desperado, "someone happens to get in the way."

"What do you—aw—propose to do, Mr. West?" Reginald Montrose queried, showing how greatly interested he was.

"I am going to give you a lesson in shooting, Reggie," was the reply.

"In here?"

"Why, yes. The boss of the place does not object, so it is all right. We must have light, you know, so it has got to be inside."

"Aw! I understand."

But the dude did not understand, even though he said so.

"Hop," said Wild, nodding to the Chinaman, "step over by that table close to the wall and hold up a card."

"Allee light, Mislér Wild," was the reply, and the clever Chinaman quickly drew a pack of cards from his pocket.



He looked them over and selected the ace of hearts, holding it up for the boy's approval.

"That one will do," said Wild.

Those in the way soon moved, for they did not feel like having bullets whistling about their heads.

It was plain to everyone in the shanty saloon that Young Wild West was going to give a shooting exhibition, and they were all interested, even to those who had been plotting against the life of the boy but a short time before.

But their interest was of a different nature; they were afraid of the young deadshot.

"Me leady, Misler Wild," called out Hop, as he held up the card close to the wall of the building.

"All right. Now, Reggie, just watch me. See how easy it is to shoot at a mark."

"I—aw—suppose it is quite easy to shoot at a mark, Mr. West; but pretty hard to hit it," was the reply.

"Oh! it is easy to hit it. That is what I meant to say. But please don't call me Mr. West. Wild is the name I go by, and you can call me that. I have taken the liberty of addressing you by the name I heard your wife use. That is the Western way of doing it, you know. But just watch me hit that card while the Chinaman holds it for me."

The next minute the long-barreled Smith & Wesson was raised until the muzzle pointed directly over the boy's head.

Then it came down quickly until the barrel was on a direct line with the card.

Crack!

The report rang out sharp and clear.

The light in the place was pretty good, and the result was that our hero had hit the ace of hearts nearly in the center.

"Lat velly good shottee, so be," declared Hop, nodding his approval.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the dude.

"Hop, just pin a card to the wall," said Wild, paying no attention to the expressions of surprise and admiration that came from the men in the place.

"Allee light, Misler Wild," and the Chinnee was not long in pinning up the ace of clubs.

"There, Reggie," Wild observed, nodding to the young man. "That is a much better target, for it has a black spot instead of a red one, on it. Take this gun and try your luck."

Reggie took the revolver unhesitatingly.

It was evident that, though he might be a novice at shooting at a mark, he had fired a revolver before.

"Wait a minute," said the young deadshot. "Just hold up your forefinger and then bring it down quickly and make it point directly at the ace-spot."

The dude did exactly as he was told.

"That's it. Now take the gun and go through the same performance."

"How is that, Wild?" and Reggie smiled and looked pleased as he did as directed.

"That's good. Now cock it, and then take a shot at the card."

The dude was rather long in taking aim, but he did

even better than Wild thought he would, for as the report rang out the card dropped to the floor.

One of the miners picked it up and brought it to our hero.

"Took a little piece off ther edge," he said. "I reckon that's putty good, fer a tenderfoot."

"Very good, indeed," declared Wild. "Now, try it again, Reggie."

The dude did so, but failed to hit the card.

Then Wild explained just how he should hold the gun, and at the third shot Reggie placed a bullet quite close to the ace of clubs in the center of the card.

The tenderfoot was roundly applauded.

He bowed to the crowd and acted as though he actually felt proud of his achievement.

"I have already been taught a lot, Wild," he said, nodding to our hero. "This is the first time I ever attempted to shoot at anything in the lamplight."

"Oh, you'll come around all right, Reggie," was the reply. "I am pretty certain you are made of the right kind of stuff, so all you need is a little practice. If you are going to stay long around the mining camps of the West it will stand you in hand to know how to shoot. You never can tell just when you are going to be attacked by a ruffian, you know."

It was evident that Doc took this upon himself, for he arose to his feet and quickly answered:

"I didn't mean no harm to yer, young man, when I started shootin' at ther ground close to your feet. I hope you don't bear me no grudge. It's a way I have when I git a little too much bug juice aboard. But I was only in fun."

"Oh, I have nothing against you," the dude declared. "But I think you have against me. After I have been taught a little more about shooting I shall challenge you to fight a duel."

This was hardly expected by Wild, and he looked at the tenderfoot admiringly.

"You're all right, Reggie," he declared. "I reckon you can whip a galoot in any way he wants to fight. He just said he meant no harm to you, but I know he lies. He is a sneaking scoundrel, as I can tell by just looking at him. He was in the cellar under this shanty putting up some kind of a game when we came in here. I know that, just as well as if I had heard what was said. Those who were down there with him are no better than he is, either. But they had better look out how they act."

The ruffians who had been in the cellar when the explosion occurred said not a word, though they looked at each other and shrugged their shoulders.

Wild was not satisfied yet, so he quickly made up his mind to show the desperado and his gang something more in the line of shooting.

He felt that the villains had been plotting against his life, and he was bound to make them understand that they were going to have no easy time of it, if they really tried to kill him.

He had taken a strong dislike for the desperado, anyhow, and he thought he might as well show him up for all he was worth.

"Doc," said he, looking at the man, while the vestige



of a smile played about his lips, "the boss of this shanty hinted a short time ago that there was a man here who could beat me shooting. Somehow, I have been struck with the idea that you're the man he referred to. Anyhow, I'm going to take it for granted that you are. Now you just step over there where the Chinaman stood when he held the card for me to shoot at. I am going to see how much nerve you have got."

A deathly stillness came over the room as the boy ceased speaking.

But presently the miners began whispering and talking in low tones among themselves.

Doc made no move to leave the spot he had been standing upon while addressing the dude.

"Do as I say!" called out our hero, sharply. "I am in the habit of being obeyed when I tell a man to do a thing, especially when he is a sneaking ruffian like you are."

The young deadshot was certainly playing a strong game now.

He knew that there were at least eight men in there who were against him, and that they were villains was a pretty sure thing.

But that only made him the more anxious to have it out with the desperado.

"What are yer goin' to do?" Doc asked, as he walked slowly to the side of the room.

"I am going to show you how close I can come to you without killing you," was the cool rejoinder.

The face of the desperado turned pale.

He looked at his companions pleadingly, but not one of them offered to say a word.

"Hop," said Wild, "just hand him a cigar. I want to show him how easily I can pick it from his mouth without hurting him."

"Allee light, Misler Wild," and the Chinaman quickly produced a cigar and stepped over to the desperado.

"I don't want no cigar," declared the villain, doggedly. "I ain't goin' ter set myself up for no target for any fancy shootin' for Young Wild West or anybody else. He's got me dead to rights, I s'pose, so if he wants to go ahead an' shoot me, let him do it."

"Stick the cigar in his hat band, Hop," said our hero, just as though he did not hear what the man said.

"Allee light, Misler Wild," and Hop did so without any hesitation.

The boy quickly swung his revolver around on a level with the man's hat, and taking a quick aim, pulled the trigger.

Crack!

The cigar leaped from the hat and landed upon the floor, broken in two.

"I reckon a few hairs from your head and a piece of your hat went with that shot, Doc," Wild said, in his cool and easy way. "How about it?"

"Don't shoot no more, Young Wild West," called out the man, pleadingly, for he now had lost all his false courage, and was as humble and meek as a lamb.

"All right, I won't then. You haven't enough sand in you to stand the test. I told you I was going to see how close I could come to you without killing you. That

should have set you at ease, for I have the reputation of never missing what I shoot at."

"Don't shoot no more. I've got enough," and the desperado quickly left the spot and sat down at a table again.

Wild ejected the empty shells from the chambers of his revolver, and put fresh cartridges in their place.

Then turning to Charlie and the dude, he said:

"Well, I guess there is nothing to keep us here any longer. We will go on back to the hotel. To-morrow we will come around and have a look at the cellar that is under this shanty. I have an idea that it is something worth seeing."

Jerry paled slightly at this remark, but did not venture to say anything.

"Me stay lillie while, so be, Misler Wild," spoke up Hop, as our hero and his two companions started for the door. "Me wantee havee lillie fun, so be."

"All right, Hop. I reckon no one will harm you. But just behave yourself, and don't get into trouble of your own accord."

"Me be velly goodee Chinee, Misler Wild," declared the Chinaman, looking as serious as an owl.

Wild left the place, followed by the scout and Reggie.

They started direct for the Seven Up Hotel, which, as has been said, was but a short distance away.

"Boys," said our hero, as they crossed the sandy street, "I reckon we have got to be on the watch for those villains. I am satisfied that the cellar is nothing more than a secret meeting place for a gang of scoundrels. That they were plotting something against us I feel certain. But they are a very cowardly lot, as you can see, so it is not likely that we will have a very hard time in managing them. Still, we must keep our eyes open. Reggie, to-morrow morning I'll give you another lesson in shooting, and I will also show you how to handle a rope. I have taken a deep interest in you, and you can bet all you're worth that I will do all I can for you. But say! Do you intend to remain in these parts very long?"

"Not very long, Wild," said the dude. "We should not have come here only my wife has an uncle out here somewhere. We heard he was here at Glimmer, but the landlord and his wife both declare that there is no one here bearing the name of Swift—John Swift. He is my wife's uncle, you know."

"Maybe he goes by some other name," suggested the scout. "Wait till to-morrow mornin', an' it might be that we'll find him for yer."

"Thank you," and Reggie showed how pleased he was at the way the scout talked.

Reaching the hotel they went into the sitting-room, or parlor, and found the bride anxiously awaiting the return of her husband.

She had tired of talking with the landlord's wife, and as Reggie appeared she sprang forward to greet him.

"As it is still early in the evening, suppose we go over to the camp," said Wild. "Mrs. Montrose might want to talk with the girls. I know very well that they would be pleased to have her company for awhile."

"I should only be too pleased to go," declared the dude's wife.

"Certainly," chimed in Reggie. "Get ready, Marie."



"It won't take me long to do that," she laughingly answered.

Five minutes later they were all walking toward the camp.

When they got there the girls were delighted at being called upon by the bride and groom.

It was a pleasant evening that they spent, as might be supposed.

## CHAPTER VI.

### THE TRICK DICE.

To say that the eight villains were relieved when Young Wild West left the shanty would hardly be expressing it.

The fact was that they were all very much afraid of the young deadshot.

Having heard of the reputation he had was quite enough to make them look upon him as no ordinary person, but what had happened since he had arrived at Glimmer was quite enough to make them fully understand that he was even more than a dangerous one to interfere with.

Still, after he left them their courage came back, and it was not many minutes before they were whispering among themselves as to what they intended to do to the boy.

Hop remained standing at the little bar, and though he appeared to be taking no particular notice of anything that was going on, he was watching the men who had come through the trap-door after the explosion closely.

Finally he nodded to the half-witted bartender and said:

"Me likee chuckee dice for um dlink, so be."

"I don't chuck dice," was the reply. "I don't know how to do it."

"Me showee you velly muchee quicke."

"No," and Johnny grinned and shook his head.

"Allee light," and then Hop turned and looked over those in the room.

His eyes presently rested upon Doc, the desperado.

"You wantee chuckee dice for um dlink?" he asked, smiling blandly.

"I'll chuck yer for ten dollars," was the quick reply.

"You don't s'pose I would stand up to a bar an' chuck dice with a heathen, jest for drinks, do yer?"

"Allee light, me chuckee dice for ten dollee, so be."

As Hop said this he quickly laid two five-dollar gold pieces upon the bar.

The desperado opened his eyes.

Then after whispering a few words to his companions he left them and joined the Chinaman.

But the rest were not long in following.

They wanted to see what would happen.

Hop always carried with him two or three sets of trick dice, and it was seldom difficult for him to match them with those to be found at the saloons he visited.

The dice he had contained but fives and sixes, so when they were rolled out the least possible throw the three cubes would make was fifteen.

Jerry now took his place behind the bar.

He handed out the leather dice cup that contained the three dice that were used in his place, and then Doc

placed ten dollars upon the counter beside the money Hop had laid there.

The Chinaman examined the dice and placed them back into the cup, pushing it toward Doc.

"One thlow and count um spots, so be," he said, smilingly.

"All right," was the reply, and then after shaking them the desperado rolled the dice upon the bar.

"Fourteen!" he exclaimed, jubilantly, as two fours and a six came up.

"Lat velly goodee thlow, so be," remarked the clever Chineese, the same old bland smile that so frequently showed upon his face being there now. "Me beatee lat, maybe, so be."

"I'll bet yer another ten that yer don't beat it."

"Allee light. Me takee lat bet."

This time Hop pulled out a handful of gold coins, and the sight of them fairly dazzled the eyes of the ruffians.

"Do yer want to bet another ten dollars that you'll beat fourteen?" Jerry asked, eagerly.

"Me bettee hundled dollee," was the unexpected reply.

"All right. 'I'll go yer."

"I'll take another hundred," spoke up one of the others.

"Allee light."

Hop dove into one of his pockets again, and this time produced a roll of bills.

He was not long in putting up the money, and then he scooped up the dice with his right hand, taking the cup with his left.

The dice were dropped into the cup, but not the ones Doc had used in making his throw of fourteen.

But no one knew the difference, for if they had suspected such a thing, and had been watching closely they could not have detected what the Chinaman did.

Hop rattled the dice in the box for a second or two, and then let them roll out upon the bar.

"Seventeen!" exclaimed Jerry, his jaw dropping.

"Lat light," Hop answered, as he scooped up the dice, and then dropped those that belonged there into the box.

Then he reached out and pulled in the money he had won.

"Me velly smartee Chineese," he added, cheerfully. "Me velly lucky when me play dice. Me bettee hundled dollee me beatee um thlow somebody make. Me givee you thlee thlows, and len you takee um biggest thlow, and me bettee hundled dollee me beatee."

"Whew!" exclaimed Doc. "That's sartinly a great proposition. "Do you mean to say that you'll give me a chance to throw three times, an' then keep ther biggest throw for my own? An' then you'll throw once ag'in it an' beat it?"

"Lat light. Me allee samee tlee blue sport. Me bettee hundled dollee."

"All right. Put up your money."

Doc barely had a hundred dollars, but he managed to scrape it up by borrowing a little from one of his chums.

Hop counted out the necessary amount and placed it upon the bar.

The stakes were within easy reach of him, and he took care to be ready to scoop in the money when he won it, so he would be sure to get it in case a dispute arose.



The desperado threw the dice, the first throw being eleven.

The second throw was but seven, but the third counted thirteen.

"I'll take thirteen for my throw," he declared. "You have got to beat that in one chuck, or I win ther money."

"Lat light," and the Chinaman smiled serenely.

Then he cleverly picked up the dice and changed them, as he had done before.

He rolled them out in a careless way, and fifteen came up.

Bowing to his victim, he quickly scooped in the money and slipped it under his coat.

Then he picked up his dice and took care to drop the regular ones into the cup.

By this time nearly every man in the room had crowded about to see what was going on.

The loud talk of the men told them that it must be something very exciting.

It was not long before everyone there knew the sort of game the Chinaman was betting on.

Several of them wanted to play that way with him, one man offering to bet a thousand dollars.

But Hop had selected the friends of the desperado as his victims, and he refused to throw with anyone else.

It happened that some of them had considerable money, especially Jerry, the proprietor of the saloon.

But Jerry was a little cautious now.

He thought the Chinaman was simply running in a big streak of luck, and he wanted to throw for ten dollars each time, and no more.

But Hop would not hear to this.

"Me velly muchee lucky," he declared. "Me wantee chuckee for hundled dollee."

Three of the villains put together and raised the amount, Cal Jenks being the one selected to do the throwing.

He threw three times, but the best he could get was twelve.

But that was a very good throw, considering that the Chinaman had but one throw to beat it.

Hop won again, of course.

It could not be otherwise, since the least he could throw was fifteen with his trick dice.

The game continued for nearly half an hour, and by that time Hop had won over a thousand dollars.

But he went a little too far with it, for as Jerry threw fourteen and found himself beaten by sixteen he picked up the dice and threw them upon the floor behind the bar.

Then it was that the half-witted bartender picked them up, and though he was very stupid about other matters, he made the discovery that the dice were not the regular kind.

"Look, boss," he exclaimed. "This dice got sixes and fives. No aces or deuces on it."

That was quite enough.

The villains understood why it was they had lost their money.

Dark looks were cast at the clever Chinaman, who began to feel anything but pleasant just then.

"Whattée mattee?" he asked, innocently.

"I'll show yer what's ther matter, heathen," declared the desperado suddenly, as he whipped out a revolver and leveled it at him. "You pony up that money you won right away or I'll put a hole through you, Young Wild West or no Young Wild West."

"Me no undelstand," declared Hop, trying his best to bluff the ruffian.

But it would not go.

The desperado meant business.

They all took a look at the dice, and the more they thought of how they had been swindled, the more angry they became.

Jerry knew very well that the Chinaman had considerable money upon his person, so he managed to catch the eye of Doc and nodded toward the back room.

The desperado understood.

Suddenly he leaped forward and caught Hop by the collar.

"I'll chuck yer outside right away, heathen!" he exclaimed. "You're a skin."

Into the back room he dragged him, while one of the men quickly lifted the trap-door.

Then Hop was dropped down like a shot, the door being closed gently and a barrel rolled upon it.

The desperado ran on outside, followed by two or three of the others, and then he fired two or three shots in the air, while all yelled in unison.

It happened that none of those who were not in league with the villains saw the Chinaman tumble into the cave below the building, since Jerry had been clever enough to dart quickly forward and close the door.

Doc came in by the front way laughing heartily.

"You oughter seen that heathen light out for ther Seven Up," he exclaimed, so everyone in the room could hear him. "If it hadn't been that he was Young Wild West's Chinee I would have filled him full of hoies; but as it was, I jest fired over his head to make him run. But never mind. I reckon if someone waits on Young Wild West to-morrow an' tells him how ther heathen skinned us we'll git our money back."

"There ain't no doubt about that," declared Jerry. "I'm glad yer didn't hurt ther heathen. We've all seen what sort of a galoot that boy is. He won't stand no foolin'. He's a deadshot, an' with ther wonderful nerve he's got he makes a mighty bad one to have ag'in yer."

Then he turned to Johnny, the bartender, who was looking at the trick dice in a delighted way.

It was evident that the half-witted fellow could not get it through his head how such things could be.

"Set 'em up, Johnny," the boss called out. "Never mind foolin' with them dice."

But Johnny seemed loath to quit examining the little cubes, and it was not until Jerry reached over and knocked them from his hand that he obeyed the order given him.

Doc and his chum had lost about all the money they had, but some of them treated, just the same.

They all knew that they would soon have a share of the Chinaman's money as well as get back that which had been lost.

They had heard the Chinaman yell after he had landed



into the cave below, and they had taken care to make as much noise as possible, so the rest of those in the shanty could not hear the sounds.

Nothing had been heard for several minutes now, so they concluded that their victim must have become quiet.

Still, they were in no hurry to go down and attend to him, as they proposed to do before they were through.

The door was open now, and Doc managed to stand where he could see the barrel that was upon the trap-door.

He made up his mind that the Chinaman should have no chance to escape.

When half an hour had passed he walked up close to Jerry and whispered:

"S'pose me an' you goes down there an' looks after ther heathen, Jerry? I reckon it's about time."

"I was thinkin' that way myself, Doc," was the reply. "But we want ter be very careful. We don't want to let no one suspect that we've got ther Chinees in ther cave."

"Well, I reckon it's all right. Ther rest of ther boys kin keep a watch, so they can't see us when we go down."

The proprietor thought a moment and then his face brightened.

"I know what we'll do, Doc," he said, suddenly. "We'll jest give it out that we're goin' over to ther Seven Up to tell Young Wild West what ther Chinaman done with ther trick dice. We'll go out of ther front door, an' then we'll sneak around to ther back an' git down under ther house."

"Good!" exclaimed Doc, his face lighting up with satisfaction. "Just ther thing, Jerry! Blamed if you ain't got a good head on you."

Having settled upon this plan of action, Jerry got his hat.

"Boys," he said, addressing those nearest the door, but loud enough for everyone in the house to hear him, "I reckon I'll go over to ther Seven Up an' see if Young Wild West is there. If he ain't he'll be over to his camp, maybe. I'll tell him in a respectful kind of way jest what ther heathen done with them trick dice. Then I'll ask him if he don't think it's fair that we should have our money back. S'pose you go with me, Doc?"

"Well, I reckon I ain't afraid of him," the desperado retorted.

"Come on, then."

Doc paused long enough to tell Cal Jenks, his chum, what was up.

Then he followed the saloon keeper outside.

The two quickly hastened around to the rear of the shanty and into the room where the trap-door was.

They were not long in moving the barrel aside, and then lifting the trap, Jerry led the way down the ladder.

There was no light there, so he struck a match when half-way down.

The confused sounds of the men overhead made a sort of rumbling, but in the dark cellar itself all was as silent as the grave.

Reaching the foot of the ladder, Jerry quickly lighted a lantern, and then holding a revolver in his hand, he started to look for the Chinaman, the desperado following him.

But it did not take them more than a minute to find that there was no one there.

The Chinaman had disappeared in some mysterious manner.

## CHAPTER VII.

### HOP SHOWS HIS CLEVERNESS IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.

Though he could not prevent himself from being dropped into the cellar, Hop was keenly alive to the situation, and was pretty well prepared for what must surely happen.

Not knowing just how far he would have to drop, he made a desperate effort to land upon his feet.

This he did, striking against the ladder near the bottom.

Fortunately he was not hurt any, and as quickly as he could gather himself together he let out a loud call for help.

But the confused sounds overhead, added to the tramping of feet upon the floor, that was made by the villains, drowned his voice, as he well knew, and he quickly came to the conclusion that it would be useless to call out.

Though the Chinaman was badly frightened, he fully realized the danger of his position, and it was not long before it occurred to him forcibly that he must endeavor to find a way to get out of his prison other than the way he had entered it.

"Lis velly muchee bad, so be," he muttered, as he listened to what was going on overhead, for he expected to be followed into the cellar by one or more of the villains right away.

But when he found this did not occur he took the risk of lighting a match.

Then he saw that it was not a cellar that had been formed by the hands of man, but was nothing more nor less than a good-sized cave.

He could not see the floor of the shanty at all, though he knew the ladder went through the opening straight to it.

"Velly funny," he mused, as he walked around and took in all that was to be seen. "Um shanty allee samee makee light over um cave, so be. Lis velly muchee of a tlap, me thlinkee. Maybe me findee um way to gittee outtee. Me hully up and lookee. Me velly smartee Chinees, and if me no findee um way to gittee outtee, len maybe me gittee killed. Lat be velly bad. Me no likee."

The match flickered and went out just then, so Hop felt in his pockets and soon produced a piece of candle.

He carried a little of everything with him, from bottles down to vials and chemicals, rubber snakes, firecrackers, and many other articles that were used to assist him in performing his feats of magic.

The candle came in very handy just then, for it enabled him to see his way about the cave.

He was not long in finding a fissure at what might be called the rear end of the underground place.

Through this a slight draught of air was drawing, and the moment he realized this the clever Chinaman made up his mind that if he was going to get out by any other way than by ascending the ladder and forcing the trap-door this would be the way.

But the fissure was so narrow that it would scarcely more than permit him to force his arms in it.



However, he felt about after doing this and found the dirt was very soft and yielding there.

He also discovered that the further he pushed his arm in the wider became the opening.

After crumbling away considerable of the dirt he pushed the candle in.

The draught at once extinguished it, so he went about it a little more carefully in lighting it again.

This time he used both hands, one to hold the candle and the other to shut off the draught of air from the flame.

Then it was that he discovered that the crack which ran through the earth to some place outside was quite wide enough two feet from the interior wall of the natural cave to permit him to pass through.

It was with no little satisfaction that he made this discovery, and he at once drew a hunting knife from the belt that was concealed under his loose-fitting coat and went to work digging away the dirt.

The wall of the cave seemed to be of solid rock, but the Chinaman had not been using his knife more than five minutes when he dislodged a piece of this.

He carefully pulled it out and placed it upon the ground.

Then he went on digging away with his knife, being careful to let the earth and particles of stone drop inside the crack, and not get out into the cave.

The fact was that the Celestial had conceived the idea to make his escape and not leave any traces of how he had done it.

He was quick to think and to act, and being of a very ingenious turn of mind, it was not strange that he should come to this conclusion.

Hop dug away for probably ten minutes, and succeeded in loosening two more pieces of rock.

These he took out and carefully deposited near the first one.

Then he was able to creep half into the opening, and finding nothing but yielding dirt the rest of the distance, to where it was wide enough for him to pass through, he worked hard with his knife and soon had finished the job.

The candle was burning all right now, and he had placed it upon a jutting piece of rock inside the crack.

"Lat velly muchee good," he muttered, and something like a smile showed upon his yellow countenance in the dim light made by the sputtering candle.

Once through into what was really a passage that was about six or seven feet in height, he started along, candle in hand.

When he had covered perhaps twenty feet there came a sharp turn to the passage, and then he found himself in a much wider place.

Fifteen or twenty feet further on and he came to the end of the passage, which was on a sloping bank that was partly concealed by vines and overhanging bushes.

As Hop pushed these aside and found himself looking upon the outside world again his heart gave a bound.

He felt like uttering a yell of delight, but as he had made up his mind to make his escape appear like a mystery, he simply walked around until he could see the shan-

ties that were not far distant, and around a bend in the high bank, and then retraced his steps into the passage.

The candle had become extinguished as he came out through the vines, but he was not long in lighting it again.

Then he quickly made his way back to the opening he had forced, and carefully placed the stones in position.

Of course, he was not able to put them exactly as they had been, but he felt satisfied that he would be able to fill up the opening sufficiently well to allay the suspicions of the villains, should they happen to look there.

No doubt they would find out finally how he got out, but the Chinaman seemed to regard the proceeding more as a practical joke than anything else.

He was even then thinking of how surprised the desperado and his companions would be when they came into the cellar and found no one there.

It did not take him long to complete his task, and then he went on out through the narrow passage to the open air.

He quietly extinguished the candle and placed it back in his pocket.

"Now len," said he, "me takee lillee walk to um camp and tell Misler Wild whatee happen. He be velly muchee suplise, so be. Len maybe me play um nicce lillee ghost tlick, if Misler Wild say allee light."

In a very happy frame of mind the clever Chinese went on around until he came to the single sandy street that ran between the two rows of shanties and tents that comprised the mining camp of Glimmer.

The usual sounds came from the saloon, but he took care not to go too close to it, since he saw several men hanging about the outside.

Hop went around to the rear of the shanties on the other side of the street, and then headed straight for the camp.

When he got there he found Reggie Montrose and his wife there; and there was a lively conversation taking place by all hands.

Of course they all saw him approach, but when he sat down near his brother, Wing, who was dozing with his back leaning against a tree, no one paid any particular attention to him.

It happened that Wild was talking with the tenderfoot just then, so Hop wanted to give him a chance to get through.

After a few minutes the conversation flagged, and then Hop arose, and managed to catch the eye of our hero.

He gave a nod for him to come over, and realizing right away that something of importance had occurred, or was likely to occur, the young deadshot quickly obeyed.

"What is it, Hop?" he asked, looking at the Chinaman sharply.

"Me havee velly muchee timee in um saloon, Misler Wild," was the reply.

"Is that so? What happened?"

"Me chuckee lillee dieee with um despelado and um boss, and me allee samee winnee plenty money, so be. Um fool Melican man whatee sellee um dlinks allee samee findee out lat um dice velly muchee funny. Len um bad gang gettee velly muchee mad. Doc makee believe shootee



me, but pletty soonee he takee me by um collee and dlag me in um backee loom. Len um bad man allee samee open um tlap-door and dlop me into um cave under um shanty. Me no gittee hurt velly muchee, and when me findee lat me no havee um chance to gittee outtee, me lookee 'lound pletty muchee quickee. Me lightee candle and pletty soon me findee um clack where um wind come thlough. Len me allee samee feel velly good. Me diggee um piece of lock loose, and pletty soon me gettee in um lillee passage. Len me findee um way outtee on um other side of um bank. Len me go backee, and puttee um lock back, so um bad Melican mans no undelstand how me allee samee gittee out. Me play velly nice lillee tlick, Misler Wild."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed the boy, in surprise. "I should say you did play a nice little trick. Hop, you can consider yourself mighty lucky, I think. It is a wonder the scoundrels didn't murder you right away. I suppose they thought they would leave it until a little later, though. But how did they manage to get you down there without those in the saloon knowing of it?"

"Ley do velly muchee quick, Misler Wild. Me no undelstand, but nobody comee lookee for me. Maybe ley shuttee um door, so nobody see."

"I reckon they must have, Hop. But say! You're a wonder, you are. Now then, if the scoundrels don't find out how you got out we'll have a chance to get into the cave and surprise them. Some of them will get into the cave all right, for you can bet we'll be after them so hot before this thing is over that they'll feel like hiding."

"Lat light, Misler Wild," and the Chinaman nodded and smiled blandly.

Wild did not tell Charlie and Jim or the girls what had happened just then, though they could all guess that something of more than usual note had taken place, since they had seen how interested the young deadshot was while the Chinaman was talking to him.

"Hop has just been telling me how he fooled the desperado and his crowd with his trick dice," he said, as he walked back and joined the party. "He had quite a lively time of it, and he was lucky to get out of the shanty. There is a half-witted fellow there who helps the boss of the saloon, and he made the discovery that Hop's dice had nothing but fives and sixes upon them. It seems strange that he should be able to do that, when the rest were deceived."

Reggie and his wife became interested right away.

They wanted to know all about the dice, so Hop, who had more of the same kind, came over and showed them.

Then he gave an illustration of how he had been able to win every time he threw.

"Very clever, indeed," declared the dude. "The—aw—Chinaman is certainly a wonderful fellow."

"Remarkable, I should say," his wife added, looking at Hop with surprise and admiration.

"Well, nothing is so very wonderful about him, after all, since he is a very clever magician," Wild hastened to say.

"A magician, eh?" and Mrs. Montrose opened wide her eyes.

"Lat light," declared Hop, nodding and smiling. "Me

allee samee velly smartee Chinee. Me gottee uncle what velly gleat magician. He velly smartee Chinee and me allee samee likee my uncle."

"Oh, it runs in the family, does it?"

Hop shook his head.

"It no lun in um family, so be. My blother, Wing, allee samee um fool Chinee. He no smartee."

"But your uncle was, you say."

"Lat light; but he no blood lelotion; he my mother's blother's wife's sister's blother."

The Chinaman did not crack a smile as he said this, but looked very serious, indeed.

"What was his name?" asked Reggie, looking a little puzzled, and no doubt thinking it was in order to say something.

"Hip Hi Bang," answered Hop, readily. "He velly smartee man, so be."

"And you're just like him?" asked the bride.

"Yes, lat light. If you wantee me to show you velly nicee lillee tlick me be velly muchee glad, so be."

"Go ahead and do something that's real puzzling, Hop," spoke up our hero, who knew the Chinaman was itching to show them something. "I think it would be a good idea if you could present Mrs. Montrose with a nice red rose. Maybe you can make one from a cigar, or something of the kind. Here's a cigar, go ahead and see what you can do with it. It might be that it could be easily transformed into a rose."

"Lat light, Misler Wild," and the Chinaman nodded as though it would be quite easy.

Reggie and his wife watched with great interest.

No doubt they had witnessed many of the best of sleight-of-hand performers that appear upon the public stage.

But they had never seen a simple-looking Chinaman do anything of the sort.

It happened that Hop was ready to perform the very trick Wild had suggested, so he lost no time about getting at it.

First he produced the big yellow silk handkerchief that he always had with him for the purpose of enabling him to perform his clever tricks.

This he carefully shook out and held up to the view of all hands so they might satisfy themselves that it contained nothing whatever.

Then he held up the cigar Wild had given him and said:

"Now len, you watchee me. Lis cigar gottee um seed whattee make um lose bush inside. Me stickee um cigar in um glound; len me covee um with um handkelchief and len when me say for um nicee lose to glow, it allee samee glow. Everybody watchee."

With a pointed stick he dug a little hole in the ground and pushed the cigar into it, packing the dirt carefully about it and leaving it standing in an upright position.

This done, he pulled forth the handkerchief, which, by the way, was passed under his coat while he was planting the cigar, and carefully placed it over the same, being careful to leave a point projecting upward in the shape of a pyramid.

"Me wantee makee loom for um lose bush to glow," he



explained, as he finished arranging the handkerchief. "Now len, watchee."

Rising to his feet, he walked around it three times.

Then he paused and began making mysterious passages with his hands over the handkerchief.

Suddenly the handkerchief was seen to move slightly.

It was rising gradually before the eyes of the spectators.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed the dude's wife, as she caught hold of her husband's arm. "Look, Reggie, look! The Chinaman is certainly a great magician!"

"By jove! you're right, Marie," Reggie answered.

The handkerchief had now been raised nearly a foot from the ground, and as it no longer moved, Hop gave a nod of satisfaction and then stooped and picked it up.

The cigar had disappeared, and in its place was the branch of a rose bush bearing a beautiful flower of a scarlet hue.

Exclamations of surprise went up from the dude and his wife, while the rest simply looked on and smiled.

The latter knew quite well that there were plenty such roses to be found not far distant from the camp, since they grew wild.

Hop had no doubt plucked one of them, taking a piece of the branch with it, and he had easily planted it under cover of the handkerchief.

The handkerchief had raised as the branch straightened up from a bent position.

As they had seen the same trick performed many times, it was easy for them to guess all this.

Hop was very much pleased at the expressions of delight that came from Mrs. Montrose, so he broke the rose from the branch, and taking off his hat made a bow and tendered it to her.

"Oh, thank you!" she exclaimed. "Isn't it lovely, Reggie?"

"Beautiful," declared her husband. "But just to think of it! It grew from a cigar. You know you don't like cigars, so I suppose when you come to think of it you will not be so much pleased over the rose, after all."

"Oh, yes, I am. I know very well it was but a clever trick."

"Lat light," nodded Hop. "Lat um velly clever trick, so be. Me velly smart Chinee."

Then he proceeded to show them a few more of his tricks, and as some of them were very amusing indeed, the young couple managed to pass a very pleasant evening at the camp.

When they finally left to go back to the hotel before bidding them good-night, Wild said:

"Well, Reggie, I'll try and fix it up to-morrow morning so that you can have the duel with the desperado. You can rest assured that there will be no danger of getting hurt, for I will arrange it so that cannot happen. Just leave it to me."

"All right, Wild," was the reply. "I am not afraid of the—aw—villain, anyway. But of course I don't want to endanger my life. I—aw—have just been getting married, you know."

"That's right. You leave it to me."

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE CHALLENGE.

Wild told Hop not to show himself again that night, and not to leave the camp next morning until he gave him permission to do so.

The young deadshot knew quite well that the Chinaman would do exactly as he told him, so not long after the departure of Reggie and his wife, all but Cheyenne Charlie, who was to stand watch the first part of the night, retired.

Nothing occurred to disturb them, which showed plainly that the desperado and his gang were afraid to interfere with them, even though they no doubt wanted to do it badly.

Our friends had just finished eating their breakfast the following morning, when who should happen to come along but the dude.

"Good-morning, everybody!" he said, cheerfully. "I hope you slept well last night. It seems to me that I would not exactly—aw—fancy sleeping in a tent. But I suppose you are used to it."

"Oh, yes, we like it fully as well as sleeping in a house," Wild answered. "But what brings you out so early? Why, it is not yet seven o'clock. I had an idea that people of your calibre were inclined to remain in bed later than this."

"Well, I always have been in the habit of lying a little later than this, but I—aw—thought I would get up early and come and have a talk with you about that—aw—duel, you know. You said you would arrange it so I should fight with that saucy fellow who calls himself a desperado. Now how are you going to arrange it, Wild?"

"Oh, that will be easy, Reggie," and the boy smiled reassuringly. "I will let Hop load a pair of revolvers that you will use, provided the desperado consents to fight. Of course if you should give him the selection of the weapons he would choose a gun. He knows better than to tackle you with his fists, and probably he fully realizes that he would have more than he could handle if it were to be knives."

"Oh, I should not want to fight with knives at all," declared the tenderfoot, looking a bit alarmed.

"I reckon you could handle a knife pretty well, though, Reggie," declared Wild.

"He sartinly kin handle a grip all right, anyhow," spoke up Cheyenne Charlie, with a laugh. "My, but he sartinly did give that big galoot an awful welt with that grip yisterday, didn't he?"

"He certainly sent him staggering," said Jim Dart, joining in the laugh.

"Well, I happened to have it in my hand, so I just gave it to the saucy fellow good and hard," declared Reggie, his eyes kindling. "Of course, I am not afraid of him if he would fight with fists alone. I wouldn't care if he were to wrestle, either. I have taken plenty of exercise, you know, and I am pretty quick and strong. But knives and guns, as you call revolvers, are not to my liking."

"Well, I'll tell you how we'll fix it, Reggie," observed our hero. "I'll let Hop load a couple of revolvers, and then



you can rest assured that no damage will be done by either of you. Hop will see to it that there are no bullets in the chambers."

"Oh, you merely want to frighten the—aw—desperado, then?"

"Yes, that's the idea. I reckon Hop will be able to fix it so Doc will think he really has been shot. How about it, Hop?"

"Me fixee allee light, Misler Wild," spoke up the clever Chinee, who had been taking in the conversation. "You leave lat to me. Me velly smart Chinee, so be; me fixee."

The dude now appeared to be more at ease.

"Will you tell me how you are going to do it, Hop?" he asked, after a pause.

"No," and the Chinaman shook his head. "You no be flaid of gittee shot. Me fixee lat allee light."

"Reggie," said Wild, as the dude took a seat and watched Jim, who had started in to clean his revolvers, "I reckon the quicker you send a written challenge to the desperado the better it will be. He won't hardly dare to refuse to meet you in a duel, and I am doubly certain he will select revolvers. If he should not do that I reckon we will find a way to fix it so there won't be any damage done. Now then, suppose you write a challenge?"

"Just as you say, Wild."

"Well, go ahead, then."

Reggie quickly produced a pad and pencil.

Then he wrote the following:

"To Doc, the Desperado:

"I hereby challenge you to fight a duel at noon to-day. You have the choice of weapons. Kindly answer at once.

"REGINALD MONTROSE."

"That will do nicely," said our hero, as he read the epistle aloud. "I will deliver that myself."

"Thank you—aw—Wild," said the dude, a little nervously. "I suppose you will be my second."

"Why, certainly, Reggie. You have selected me as your teacher, you know. I took it for granted that I should second you in the duel, of course."

"Well, I am glad of that. But if you have a little time to spare, you might give me another lesson this morning in shooting. You said, I believe, that you would show me how to use a lasso, too."

"Yes, I'll do that all right. But say! have you had your breakfast?"

"No, not yet. I wanted to—aw—wait until my—aw—wife arose, y' know. I think she will be waiting for me now. I will go back to the hotel."

"All right. I'll come along with you. I'll leave you at the hotel, and then I will go and hunt up Doc."

This being settled, the two left the camp a few minutes later.

Reggie found his bride waiting for him, so after bidding Mrs. Montrose a cheery good-morning, our hero headed for Jerry's Joint.

As luck would have it, he saw the very man he was looking for just entering.

The boy hurried along and found him standing at the bar.

Three of his villainous companions were there, but the boss of the place was not around.

"Good-morning, Doc!" said Wild, just as though he was on very friendly terms with the villain. "How do you feel this morning?"

"Putty good," was the reply, while the desperado shrugged his shoulders and appeared to be rather nervous.

"Well, I have a note for you."

"What is it?"

"Just read it and find out."

"I ain't much at readin', Young Wild West," declared the desperado. "S'pose you read it for me."

"All right, I'll do that."

Then Wild read the challenge.

Doc acted as though he did not know just what to do.

"Sec here!" he said, suddenly, "what does this mean, anyhow? Does that dude want to fight a duel with me, or is it a job you are puttin' up, so I'll cash in my chips?"

"I am putting up no job on you, Doc," the boy answered, in his cool and easy way. "I will guarantee that no one else will take a shot at you but the dude, if you accept the challenge to fight in the duel. But maybe you don't want to fight with guns. It might be that you think you could whip him in a fist fight."

"Oh, no," and Doc shook his head. "If I fight it has got to be with guns."

"Well, shall I tell the dude that you will meet him at noon, and that the weapons will be revolvers?"

The desperado looked at his companions and remained silent for a moment.

"You sartinly ain't afraid of that tenderfoot, are yer, Doc?" one of them spoke up.

"Afraid of him," echoed the villain. "Why, I reckon not. But it seems to me that there is something mighty strange about this. He don't know much about shootin'. Yer all seen that last night, even though he did hit ther card he shot at. But he ain't half quick enough for a galoot like me."

"That is his lookout, not yours," spoke up our hero. "Shall I tell him that you will be on hand?"

"Yes."

"All right. Now, where will the duel take place?"

"Any place he says, so long as it's here in Glimmer."

"All right, then. We will have it take place right in front of this saloon. I am going back to give Reggie a few lessons in shooting, and by the time you are both ready to meet I reckon he will know considerably more about shooting than he does now. I will be his second, of course. You can rest assured that there will be no interference whatever. If you kill the dude not a thing will be done to you. I give you my word on that."

"From what I've heard, your word is mighty good. Young Wild West," the desperado answered, though he still seemed to be very uneasy.

"You can bet your life on that," and our hero smiled. "I might as well tell you that in case you change your mind and don't appear here at exactly twelve o'clock to-day, someone will hunt you up."

"You needn't worry about that. I'll be here, an' I'll be ready for ther dude, too."



"Very well; I'll bid you good-morning."

The young deadshot calmly walked out of the place, though he took care to keep an eye on the villains at the bar.

But none of them offered to move, and soon the boy was out of their sight.

"Well, boys, what do you make out of this, anyhow?" Doc remarked, as he looked at his companions, while he fingered the note nervously.

"Let's see it," said one of them. "I kin read, all right." He took the note and read it over.

"That's as plain as ther nose on your face, Doc. Now then, it's up to you to drop ther tenderfoot as quick as yer kin. Maybe Young Wild West will teach him how to shoot straight, but he sartinly can't make him shoot quick. That's where you'll have ther advantage."

"That's right, I s'pose," admitted the desperado. "Come on, we'll have a drink on ther strength of this here thing."

"Don't drink too much bug juice," spoke up one of the others. "You want ter be putty straight when this thing happens, yer know."

But the warning was unheeded, for the desperado took three or four drinks before he stopped.

Then he declared that he was in fine shape.

"Johnny, jest wake up Jerry," he said, nodding to the half-witted fellow behind the bar. "I reckon I want to talk to him about this here thing."

Johnny hastened to obey, and a few minutes later the proprietor of the "Joint" appeared.

When he was apprised of the challenge Doc had received he was amazed.

"I heard ther dude say somethin' about fightin' a duel with yer. Doc," he said, "but I had no idea that he meant business. But this looks as though he sartinly does mean business. You accepted it, of course?"

"Oh, yes. What else could I do?" was the reply.

"Well then, now, you want to see to it that yer drop Reggie, as they call him. He's a putty fresh galoot for a tenderfoot, anyhow."

"It will be a shame ter leave sich a young widder here in Glimmer," spoke up one of the others, laughingly. "I seen her when she struck ther camp, an' a mighty good lookin' gal she is, too."

"Oh, she's putty good lookin', all right," the desperado admitted. "But she can't hold a candle with that gal with ther yaller hair, which is Young Wild West's sweetheart, so they say."

"Well, she's only a young kid. She ain't old enough to think of gittin' married."

"Well, if I was you I wouldn't worry any about ther duel, Doc," said Jerry, after a pause. "Where's ther rest of ther boys?"

"They'll be here putty soon, I s'pose," the desperado answered.

"Well, yer know what we was goin' ter do this mornin', don't yer?"

"Oh, yes."

Just then the rest of those who had been at the meeting in the cave under the shanty appeared on the scene.

It had been arranged the night before that they were to

go down into the underground place that morning and try and find out how the Chinaman had made his escape.

A search the night before had revealed nothing that would give them the least clue.

Jerry attended to the bar while his mate got his breakfast, and then it happened that there were no other customers in the place, since the miners had gone to their work.

"Now then, we'll go down an' see about this here thing," said the villainous proprietor, in a low tone of voice. "Come on, boys."

"One of us had oughter stay up an' watch," suggested Cal Jenks. "There ain't no tellin' just when Young Wild West an' his pards might show up, or maybe that heathen Chineese might pop along."

"I don't believe we'll ever see him again," declared Jerry, shaking his head.

"Why, how is that? He ain't in ther cellar, that's sure. That shows he must have got out. Bnt how could he git out? He sartinly couldn't squeeze through that little crack that runs back into ther ground, could he?"

"Oh, no, that ain't wide enough for him to any more than git his arm through. But he sartinly got out. That's all there is to it. We'll see him again, all right."

"Well, let's go down and look."

It was arranged that Jenks was to remain in the back room near the trap-door, while the rest went down and made an investigation.

The piece of old carpet was removed, the trap lifted, and then one at a time the seven villains went down, leaving the eighth in the room.

This time they made a rigid examination of the cave, and the result was that they discovered the piece of rock that had been removed in order to permit Hop to make his escape.

When it had been taken out Jerry squeezed his way into the passage and went on until he came to the outside.

The rest followed him, for they were now well satisfied that the mystery was solved.

They went on around to the front door of the saloon and entered.

When Jenks heard them coming in he came from the rear room, and when he set eyes upon them he gave an exclamation of surprise.

"The mystery's solved, Jenks!" exclaimed the desperado, his face wreathed in smiles.

"Tell me all about it," was the reply.

It did not take but a few words to explain matters to him, and then to satisfy himself Jenks descended the ladder and went through the narrow passage.

"Well," he said, when he came back, "I reckon that sorter spoils our secret headquarters."

"Never mind about that," Jerry spoke up, just as though it was of no consequence. "We'll git ther Chinaman's money, an' we'll have ther life of Young Wild West an' his pards, too. Jest leave it to me. I am goin' to do some tall thinkin' now. We'll wait till after ther duel is done with, an' then we'll put up a job that will clip Young Wild West an' his pards, see if we don't. I'm goin' ter use ther same old cave to do it in, too."



## CHAPTER IX.

## THE DUEL.

For two full hours Young Wild West acted as a teacher for the tenderfoot.

He showed him many things and found he had a very apt pupil, indeed.

A rope was strung between two trees and to it was attached the dummy of a man, which Hop easily rigged up.

By means of a rope the figure could be kept jumping and dancing about, and the old pair of boots that were attached to the lower extremities served as a target for the dude to shoot at.

He got so he could hit an object twice out of five times, and this was considered pretty good for a tenderfoot.

A few minutes before noon Hop called Wild aside and proceeded to load the chambers of the revolvers that were to be used.

"Me allee samee makee lillee fun, so be, Misler Wild," the Chinaman said, with a bland smile. "Me takee um bullets ffrom catlidges, and me puttee in some led bellies, which me takee ffrom um bush on um hill. Um bellies velly muchee lipe; plenty juice. When um hit somebody ley leave um big spot allee samee likee blood. Makee velly muchee fun, so be."

"All right, Hop. I'll watch you as you load the guns. I want to be sure that no accident can happen. I don't want Reggie to get hurt, you know. The chances are that Doc will do the quickest firing, and as he has had considerable experience at that sort of thing, most likely he will be able to hit the mark, too."

"Me tellee whattee you do, Misler Wild," said Hop, a broad grin showing on his yellow countenance. "You makee Misler Leggie havee on um whitee shirt."

"I understand, Hop," and our hero laughed at the suggestion. "I'll do that."

"Maybe you makee um despelado puttee on um whitee shirt, too, so be."

"Well, I suppose that can be done, too, if he has such a thing as a white shirt."

"Me gottee whitee shirt, so be. Me fixee."

"All right, then, Hop. You just fix the revolvers up right away, and then I'll take them."

Hop was not long in doing this.

As he said, the berries were very ripe and full of juice.

As our hero looked at the two chambers he felt that there was surely going to be a lot of fun when the duel was fought.

He told Reggie that it would be advisable to put on a white shirt, and declared that he would see to it that his opponent did the same.

A few minutes before twelve the party set out for the spot where the duel was to take place.

Of course it had got noised about the camp about the duel, and the miners quit a little earlier than usual so they could be on hand to witness it.

A big crowd had gathered in front of Jerry's Joint when our friend came up.

Hop had a spotless white shirt with him, and as Doc

came out and announced that he was ready Wild stepped up to him and said:

"There is one thing the dude would like to have you do."

"What is it?" came the reply from the villain, who had been drinking whiskey to get up a false courage.

"He wants you to wear a white shirt, the same as he has on."

"I'd do that quick enough, if I had one, Young Wild West."

"Well, we have one here for you, so just put it on."

Hop stepped forward and handed the shirt to the desperado, who looked at it in amazement.

Doc went inside the saloon, and a few minutes later came out wearing the white shirt with its glossy bosom.

He announced that Cal Jenks would second him, and then all being arranged by our hero that no one would interfere, no matter which of the duelists fell, he seemed perfectly satisfied.

Just as it was twelve o'clock by our hero's watch he held up his hand and called out:

"Now then, take your places. Here are the guns."

He held the two weapons out and permitted Doc to make a selection.

But they were both alike, so the villain took the first one his hand touched.

The other was then handed to Reggie, who seemed to be perfectly at his ease, which was rather surprising to the desperado and his friends.

Then Jerry was selected as the one to fire the shot that would start the duel.

The duelists took up a position about twenty feet from each other, and stood waiting, each holding his revolver.

"Are yer ready?" Jerry asked, as he raised a revolver over his head.

"Yes," came the reply from both.

Crack!

Jerry pulled the trigger, and as the report rang out both men began firing.

The desperado got in two shots before the tenderfoot could fire one, but both missed.

Then he started toward the dude, and this time as he fired a blood red spot appeared upon the white shirt front before him.

But Reggie did not drop.

On the contrary, he fired two shots in succession, and then two red spots appeared on the desperado's shirt front.

Cheyenne Charlie now broke into a loud laugh, and those standing around looked at him in amazement.

Crack, crack!

Doc fired his last two shots, and two more spots showed upon the shirt before him.

Crack, crack, crack!

Reggie emptied the chambers of his revolver and succeeded in putting two more spots on the white front before him.

Doc really thought he was wounded, but as he felt no sting he could not account for it.

He looked around and found that several were laughing heartily now, and then it dawned upon him that he was the victim of a joke.



Then he made a bee-line for the saloon, while the crowd broke into a yell of derision.

Meanwhile Young Wild West and his friends were having all they could do to explain matters to the questioning crowd, but it soon leaked out that the Chinaman had loaded the chambers, and that it was a big joke.

Everybody was pleased, of course, for no one but the desperado and his gang desired to see the dude fall a victim to the ruffian.

Hooting and laughing, the crowd surged into the saloon and began bantering the desperado.

It was a little more than Doc could stand, and finally he became so exasperated that he called out, defiantly:

"That might be a good joke for you all to laugh at, but I want ter tell yer now that I'm ready to fight with my own gun. I'll fight with ther dude, or anybody else in ther crowd, Young Wild West included."

Wild was not near enough to hear this, but someone quickly went out and made it known to him.

But Wild was within hearing now, and appearing in the doorway, his revolver in hand, he exclaimed:

"You have either got to fight or eat dirt, you sneaking coyote! Which is it going to be?"

"I'll eat dirt, Young Wild West," came the quick reply, which no doubt came unexpectedly to many of those present.

Thoroughly frightened, expecting it would be all over with him if he did not obey, the desperado sank his teeth into the earth and began chewing a mouthful.

"Now," said Wild, sternly, "I want you to tell what you and your gang have been up to, since you have been holding secret meetings in the cave that is under this shanty."

## CHAPTER X.

### CONCLUSION.

It must have occurred to the desperado that Young Wild West had learned something of what had been going on at the mining camp, for he looked up at the revolver that was pointed at him and called out:

"Don't shoot, don't shoot! Ask Jerry if yer want to know anything. He's her boss of ther gang."

"Gentlemen," said Wild, turning and casting a sweeping glance at the men in the crowd, "how have things been going in the camp, anyway? Have any of you been robbed?"

"Lots of us, I reckon, Young Wild West," one of the miners answered. "We never could find out jest who done it, either."

"Well, I reckon Doc can tell you all about it. I am quite certain he can. You were not aware that he and several others are in the habit of holding secret meetings in a cave under this shanty, were you?"

Exclamations of surprise went up on every hand.

"Well, such is the case," went on our hero, in his cool and easy way. "Maybe if you should make a search of the place you might find out something. Hop will take you into the cellar, if you want to go. He knows two ways of getting there."

Jerry, who was standing near the doorway, was now deathly pale.

There were two or three barrels in the cave that contained various articles that had been stolen from the miners.

If they were discovered the secret would be out, so he decided to hurriedly pay a visit under the shanty and try to get possession of them.

But Cheyenne Charlie and Jim Dart both divined his intention, and as he hurriedly entered the saloon they ran around to the rear.

They were just in time to catch him in the act of lifting the trap-door.

Jim Dart took him by the collar and marched him around to the front of the saloon.

Then Wild told how the Chinaman had been caught and dropped into the cellar-like place; and how he had managed to make his way out and save his life.

The result was that there was a rush for the cave.

The clever Chinese led some around to the outside entrance, while others poured in and went down the ladder.

The barrels and boxes were emptied of their contents, which were carried upstairs to the bar room.

Articles of clothing, supplies, revolvers, knives and several empty pocketbooks were found.

Nearly all the articles were identified by those who had owned them.

The evidence was quite sufficient now, and as Wild pointed out the guilty parties they were quickly seized and disarmed.

The eight men were quickly bound, so they could not use their hands, and then they were marched back to a shanty that was used as a lock-up.

That ended the affair, as far as our hero was concerned, so he went over to the Seven Up Hotel, where the girls were waiting in the company of the dude and his wife, and then they talked it over among themselves.

"Reggie," said Wild, changing the conversation, "have you found the man you are looking for yet?"

"No, Wild," was the reply. "There has been so much excitement here that I forgot all about it."

"Well, I will make some inquiries and maybe we will be able to find him."

That afternoon John Swift was discovered.

He was one of the miners working a claim at the outskirts of the camp, but went by the name of Lonely Jack, since he preferred to remain by himself the biggest part of the time.

But he seemed happy to meet his niece and her husband, and they learned from him that he had accumulated considerable gold dust.

The reason he had been living in that way was because he had learned of the death of his wife while in the West, and had brooded over it considerably, not caring to be among the light-hearted people.

But since the young couple had shown enough interest in him to stop at Glimmer to look him up, he became brighter and declared that he was going to be different in the future.

Many of the miners were for hanging the desperado and his comrades, but the majority seemed to be inclined to take them to Silverton and let the law take its regular course.



The next day they were packed in the stage-coach, and under a strong guard they were started for that place.

That they were safely landed in the jail, our friends learned afterward, and there was no doubt but that they were sentenced in accordance with the crimes they had committed.

Young Wild West and his companions remained at Glimmer three or four days, as did Reggie and his wife.

During that time Wild gave the dude frequent lessons in shooting, and in the ways of the West.

Reggie learned rapidly, and as they were parting company, preparatory to entering the stage-coach to ride back to Silverton, he said:

"Some day I may be able to pay you for what you have taught me, Young Wild West. I know it would not do for me to offer you anything in the way of money. But we will meet again, I hope."

"I hope so, Reggie," was the reply. "You're all right, even if you are a dude. I wish you and Mrs. Montrose a long life of much happiness."

Then the usual good-byes were given, and the stage-coach rolled away.

It was but a few minutes later when Wild and the rest rode away from the mining camp.

As they came to Jerry's Joint they found it open and doing business, with quite a crowd of miners gathered in front of it.

"Come in an' have somethin' afore yer go," called out Rad Hickey, the mayor. "There ain't no real owner to this joint any more, but we've allowed that Johnny, ther half fool, is goin' ter run it for us. Ther profits will be saved up until there's enough to build a schoolhouse here. There's men comin' here with their wives an' children every week now, an' it won't be long afore we'll have a regular little town here. Of course we'll need a schoolhouse, an' we can't think of no better way to raise ther money for it."

"A good idea, boys," our hero answered, as he dismounted. "Just to help along the fund I will treat everyone here."

Then he threw a twenty dollar gold piece upon the bar, and taking three cigars for himself and partners, he told Johnny to keep the change.

As he was about to mount his horse Hop dismounted and hurriedly ran around to the rear of the place.

The Chinaman felt in a funny mood just then.

It must have occurred to him that it would be a good idea to play a practical joke before leaving the mining camp, for he rushed in to the bar and threw what appeared to be a live rattler upon it.

"Ow! Wow!" yelled Johnny, dropping behind the bar as though he had been shot. "Murder! Take it away!"

"Looke outtee!" cried Hop. "Um snakee allee samee bitee."

Then he quickly ran up and caught the rubber imitation, for such it really was, and nothing more, by the neck and made it wriggle exactly as though it were alive.

"Me gottee allee light!" he exclaimed, jubilantly. "Now len, me fixee. Me eatee uppee, so be."

Then he deliberately thrust the head of the snake into his mouth, all the while keeping it wriggling fiercely.

By aid of his sleight-of-hand he made the staring spectators believe that he swallowed the snake.

When it disappeared it simply went up his sleeve, but there was no one in the room who doubted for an instant that he had swallowed it.

"Um snakee tastee velly goodee, so be," he declared.

Johnny was the only one who had failed to see the remarkable performance, and when Hop walked around the bar and pulled him upon his feet he uttered a yell of terror.

"It's all right," said the mayor, who had thought about the tricks Hop was in the habit of performing now and then. "Ther heathen has only been havin' a little fun with us all, Johnny. He swallowed ther snake all right, but that means that it won't bother us ag'in, I reckon."

Hop gave a nod at this, and then rubbed his stomach complacently.

But he thought he had better show them how he had performed the trick, so he quickly produced the imitation and explained it.

But even then Johnny would not believe but that it was really alive.

"That heathen is a real wonder, an' no mistake," the mayor declared.

"You go buildee schoolhouse, so be?" Hop asked.

"Yes, I reckon we are," was the reply.

"Me gottee havee lillee tanglefoot to takee long," went on Hop, nodding to Johnny. "Hully uppee. Me in velly muchee hully, so be."

Then as he thought of the money he had won from the proprietor of the place, he placed a hundred dollars upon the bar and added:

"Puttee lat money away to buildee um Melican schoolhouse, so be. Me allee samee tlee blue sport. Me velly smartee Chinee. Hip hi! Hoolay for evelybody."

The miners gave him a rousing cheer as soon as they realized what the Chinaman had done.

A couple of them picked him up and carried him out to his horse.

Then, with the cheers of the crowd ringing in their ears Young Wild West and his friends rode away toward the distant hills in quest of further adventures and stirring scenes.

THE END.

Read "YOUNG WILD WEST RUSHING THE RUSTLERS; OR, ARIETTA'S LONG RANGE SHOT," which will be the next number (395) of "Wild West Weekly."

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# Wild West Weekly

NEW YORK, MAY 6, 1910.

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## SOME GOOD ARTICLES.

The icebergs of the two hemispheres are entirely different in shape. The Arctic bergs are irregular in form, with lofty pinnacles and glittering domes, while the Antarctic ones are flat-topped and solid-looking.

When Miss Blanche Giowski, of Orange, N. J., indulges in a laugh, she devotes all her energy to the performance. She recently laughed so heartily over a joke that she dislocated her jaw. A physician got it in place. Then she yawned, and for a second time it was out. Again the doctor's services were required.

The Capitol receives its annual bath a short time before Congress convenes, the toilet articles used consisting of about 2,500 feet of hose in the expert hands of one company of the fire department. Powerful streams of water at high pressure remove dust, spider webs, insects of all kinds, birds' nests, and other foreign substances from the many crevices.

The Madras Government has offered a \$350 reward for the destruction of a tiger which has created panic in the Ganjam villages, having in the last three years killed upward of 150 persons, carrying some of them off from among bands of twenty or thirty men. A reward of \$80 previously offered has proved inadequate, local shikaris being afraid to approach the creature's haunts.

"That lost and found property department at Scotland Yard is one of the best things they have in London," said a woman who has spent much time in England. "Last summer I had experience with it. I fell into a sort of habit of losing things. First it was a valuable umbrella. I did not miss it until I got to my hotel after an after theatre supper. The next morning I made my husband take me to the theatre and two restaurants where we had been the night before, but without result. Then an American friend suggested Scotland Yard. I went there, and there it was. It had been turned in by a cab driver. Twice afterward I lost that umbrella and got it back in the same fashion, each time leaving as a reward for the cab driver a per cent. of the value of the umbrella, as required. Then I lost a fine pair of opera glasses and I got them back. It is an excellent system the police over there have of encouraging honesty. A cab driver who finds anything in his vehicle is required to turn it in, and he knows that if the owner claims it he will be rewarded."

Plum Island, overlooking Plum Gut and the comparatively shoal water between this island and Great Gull, is fortified from end to end with mortars and guns of all sizes. This fortification is known as Fort Terry. It is expected that a fortification will also be placed upon Gardiner's Island. It is safe to say that all the channels leading into Long Island Sound between these islands would be planted with mines not above one hundred feet apart in case of the approach of a hostile fleet. The material, vessels and men for mining operations are being prepared. As an illustration of the part which submarine mines play in the defensive plans of the country it may be said that of the one hundred and seventy companies of coast artillery, forty-two have been assigned exclusively to submarine work. Eight vessels, four for the Pacific Coast and four for the Atlantic Coast, have been constructed for the planting of mines and in other ways assisting in their manipulation. The men for a long period have been studying harbor conditions and practising lowering and raising mines along the coasts of the United States. The cost of mine defense is very small when compared with the expense of a naval defense. It has been estimated that for \$4,000,000, a little more than half the cost of a single battleship, the entire material may be procured for mining all the harbors of a country like the United States.

## GRINS AND CHUCKLES.

Minister Takahira retains as a pleasant memory the following conversation he overheard between two ladies in Washington: Said one, "The Japanese should be excluded from America. No sooner do their young men come over here and matriculate in our schools and colleges, but they begin a systematic course of cheating." "You don't say so," exclaimed the other. "Yes I do," returned the first speaker. "They pay for only one tuition, and they always learn at least enough for two."

General Funston, at dinner in San Francisco, cited an example of great presence of mind. "In the height of the disorder here," he said, "a mob was looting a big grocery store when a band of soldiers arrived on the scene. One thief had seized two hams and was about to make off with one under each arm when he ran plump into an officer. Placing the hams in the officer's arms, he said, peremptorily: 'Take care of these, my man, or the first thing you know they will be stolen.'"

Down on a Southern plantation the dairy hands were accustomed to do the milking squatting down in a primitive fashion until the owner introduced milking stools with other improvements. But the initial experiment with the innovation was not exactly a success. The darky who first sallied forth with the stool returned bruised and battered and with an empty pail. "I done my best, sah," he explained. "Dat stool looked all right to me, but de blamed cow she won't sit on it!"

The Rev. A. A. Miner, a well-known Universalist minister, devoted himself to the advocacy of a law absolutely to prohibit the sale of liquor in Massachusetts. At a hearing in the capital, Doctor Miner and the late General Patrick Collins, Mayor of Boston, had a lively tilt over the proposed legislation, the minister in dead earnest, the mayor jocose. Finally, pointing to the temperance advocate, Collins said: "I honor Doctor Miner, and, my friends, what a good man he would be if he would only let whisky alone."



## How Apaches Hunt Deer

By Horace Appleton.

A dozen Apache Indians will run down more deer in one season than a pack of the most persistent hounds could in five. When it comes to a matter of human endurance, an Apache hunter can give points to any Caucasian that breathes. To make a sixty-mile run through woods and swamps and over hills and rocks after a deer is an ordinary every-day task for an Apache hunter, and he always gets the deer.

In every-day life the genuine, untamed Apache scorns to burden himself with any unnecessary apparel, but when he sets out for a hunt he dispenses with even such light articles of raiment as he may have been induced to affect. He needs no dog to find the deer-trail for him, for his eye is as quick as a hound's scent.

When he strikes the trail he follows it as silently as a shadow, for he knows that it will not be long before he will come in sight of the game either feeding or lying down in the bushes. When he sights the deer, which he does long before a white hunter would be able to discover it, the wily savage steals upon it with such skill and stealth that it is seldom the animal suspects his presence before he is within easy gunshot. If the deer's head is turned away from him, he shuffles his foot on the ground or breaks a twig. At the sound, the deer, if it be lying down, springs to his feet and whirls about, facing the direction of the noise. If it is feeding, it also turns quickly with its face to the hunter. The Indian is always desirous of killing the deer at the first shot, and that must be a bullet in the center of the forehead. It is for this that he makes the noise that causes the animal to turn with its face toward him.

When the deer turns, he fires at the forehead with such accuracy that his aim is rarely at fault; but if, as sometimes happens, the deer is quicker to discover the cause of its alarm than the hunter is to fire, and turns for fright, or if the hunter's gun misses fire, as it frequently will do, the serious business of the hunt begins, for the deer is off with the speed of the wind. An Apache hunter scorns to fire twice at the same deer, but it is also in his code that no deer must be permitted to escape after it has been shot at and missed. If the hunter fails to check his game at the first fire, he must run it down and be in at the death. And in this he never fails, for when an Apache starts on a trail of a marked deer, he never leaves it, unless he sustains an injury on the way that incapacitates him, until he tires it out, and returns with its carcass to his wigwam.

As the deer starts away in its fright at sight of the hunter or the sound of his gun, leaping thirty or forty feet at every bound, the Indian throws his gun on the ground, and with piercing yells starts in pursuit. The deer at first leaves the hunter far behind, putting forth its greatest efforts to get far beyond his reach as soon as possible. But, no matter how fast the deer may reel off the miles between it and its pursuer, the trail it leaves is as plain to the hunter as if it were marked in chalk all the way. A deer is the most timid and suspicious of animals, and at the same time possesses an amazing amount of curiosity. After it has placed distance between itself and the immediate danger from which it fled, it stops and awaits further developments. The Apache hunter well knows this characteristic of the deer, and he jogs along at a five-miles-an-hour gait, never lagging, never stopping. At sight or sound

of the approaching hunter, the deer bounds off again, to run a mile or two and stop again. It is these halts that are the first fatal steps in the fleeing animals. The halts are not long enough to give the deer any beneficial rest, but on the contrary, give time for its limbs to stiffen.

At each new start, the leaps grow shorter, and the deer starts away reluctantly and with decreasing activity. The Indian jogs along on the trail, maintaining a uniform rate of speed. He can keep it up without stopping for six hours, if necessary. After two or three hours' running the deer begins to look for water to quench its thirst. When this stage of the chase is reached the hunter knows that the deer's doom is sealed. After the deer once drinks there is no hope for it. It fills its parched stomach with water, and, laden with the burden, its leaps grow still shorter, and are made laboriously. If before drinking the deer made its halts at intervals of two miles, after drinking they are made every mile. The relentless Indian pursuer never drinks while on the trail. His tongue may hang white and swollen from his mouth, he may be choked with dust, his stomach may be burning up with heat, but not a swallow of water does he allow to enter it. When a deer drinks at a stream it swims to the other side, and the Indian plunges into the water at the same spot and crosses. As he dashes across he scoops up a handful of water and carries it to his mouth, where he holds it, rinsing it about for a few seconds, and then ejects it. If he is obliged to swim he lets the water run in and out of his mouth, but carefully prevents a drop from entering his stomach.

An hour or so after the Indian has discovered that the deer has filled his stomach with water, he begins to examine the trail more carefully as he runs, for he knows that it is then time for him to find signs of the deer's exhaustion. A drop of blood here and there along the trail indicates to the Indian that the deer has fallen on its knees at those spots; a bunch of hair hanging to a projecting edge of rock or sharp branch hanging low across the trail proves that the deer's strength has failed, so that it cannot turn quickly out of the way of obstacles. When these infallible signs of the deer's approaching doom are found by the hunter, he increases his speed for the first time. He soon discovers the deer, and with a yell of fiendish triumph he bounds forward. The cry startles the failing animal to a momentary burst of speed. After a leap or two it stops. As if aroused to the fact that further efforts to escape were utterly futile, it turns and faces its pursuer with all the defiance its exhausted nature will permit.

In rare instances, deer have been known to run until they fell dead in their tracks. When one stops and turns upon the human hound behind it, the latter keeps on at the top of his speed. The deer would give him a warm reception if it had the strength, but in spite of its strong will the hunter knows it is too near exhaustion to be able to harm him, and he seizes it boldly, throws it to the ground, and cuts its throat. While the deer is alive, or without a second's delay, the Indian cuts from behind its fore-shoulder a large piece of meat, and, trotting to and fro constantly, he sucks the warm blood from the meat, and now and then eats a small portion of it. After sucking the meat dry, he throws the carcass across his shoulder, if it is not too heavy, and starts back for his wigwam. If the deer is too heavy he takes a portion of the meat and hides the rest. He keeps constantly moving, for he fears that if he should stop to rest his limbs would become stiff and he could not return at once with his prize.

His wigwam may not be far from the spot where the chase ended, as the trail of a deer is always devious and circuitous, and frequently ends within a short distance of the point from which it started, but if the deer is captured 50 miles from the hunter's home he does not rest until he casts the carcass, or a



portion of it, on the ground at his wigwam door. When he reaches home, if he has been compelled to leave a portion of his game in the woods, another Indian starts at once over the trail, finds the hunter's gun, and brings in the remainder of the venison. It is not an uncommon thing for an Apache deer chase to continue for 100 miles, but a hunter calculates that he will have captured his game by the time it has led him 60 miles on the trail.

## A SUBMARINE HOTEL

Several years ago in walking along the half submerged fringing reef of the Tortugas group of islands, my attention was attracted by numbers of great, black, worm-like creatures that were strewn over the bottom just within the breakers, where the water was smooth. They were Holothurians, or sea-cucumbers. Wishing to secure a large specimen, I hauled my boat over among them, and soon had one more than a foot in length in the glass jar, or portable aquarium, carried for that purpose.

Another was lifted from its sandy bed for examination, and a curious creature it was. It seemed like a great, grotesque caterpillar, made out of leather and stuffed with water, as the handling caused it to eject two streams of water with considerable force. After placing it upon the seat of the boat, we found that the creature had ejected all its interior organs—actually thrown them off. This would have been a grievous calamity to almost any animal except the sea-cucumber; but, curiously enough, they have the faculty of producing lost parts to a wonderful degree, and if placed back in the water would soon provide themselves with an entirely new set.

If we should follow up our investigations of the anatomy of the sea-cucumber we should find that it breathes by what is called a water-vascular system. In the star-fish a hard red spot is seen upon the upper surface, punctured with minute holes. Through this water is strained and taken in, passing out into the arms and filling the sac-like feet. In the sea-cucumber there is a similar arrangement, only the madreporic plate, as the pink sieve is called, is on the inside.

Though certainly not gourmands, starvation affects them in a remarkable way. Thus, if kept a long time without food, a ring will be formed about the tail that grows deeper and deeper, until finally the tail drops off. In a short time another ring appears and another piece is sacrificed—a most remarkable operation, you will say, but quite ingenious when we understand it.

The animal is merely retrenching, and as the food supply becomes smaller and smaller, portions of the body are thrown off, so that there will not be so much to feed, until at last the sea-cucumber will sacrifice its entire body to save the mouth or head, and finally this dies, certainly after a heroic struggle.

But, while we have been looking at other sea-cucumbers, what has happened to the one we placed in the glass jar? Being a large animal, it soon exhausted the air in the water and is now endeavoring to get out, twisting its body deliberately about to show its discomfort, for you must remember that the sea-cucumber and all other water animals require air just as much as ourselves.

For a few moments the sea-cucumber writhed about in its lazy fashion, when, all at once, out of one end I saw peeping a curious, delicate head.

A moment later it was still further out—a transparent, shining fish, and soon, with a convulsive wiggle, it freed it-

self from its strange prison and swam a moment; then it settled to the bottom.

Its body was so delicate and transparent that print could almost be read through it, and a specimen that I have before me now, though shrunk and hardened in alcohol for several years, is almost like glass.

How did the fish get into the sea-cucumber? you will ask. This was, at first, a puzzle, and to ascertain whether it was accidental or not, we collected a large number of the cucumbers (*Holothuria floridiana*), and in nearly every case, as soon as the animal had exhausted the air in our aquarium, the silvery, eel-like *Fierasfer*—for that is the fish's name—would come wiggling out, swim about a moment, as if dazed and bewildered, and then sink to the bottom and die.

It was evident that the fish was not eaten by the Holothurian, and equally plain that the fish was not adapted to the outside world. Hence, we assumed that the *Fierasfer* was a boarder in the cucumber, and such is really the case.

But, though I made many experiments, the fish could never be induced to return to its home, though freshly aerated water was constantly supplied.

The explanation that seemed the most tenable was that the fish never left the Holothurian; but this was highly improbable, and so the puzzle remained until it was solved by the curator of the great aquarium at Naples, Italy.

He found that his sea-cucumbers were also inhabited by a *Fierasfer*, and by carefully watching them he saw the fishes come out and return.

In the large tank the fishes ventured out, and swam around, probably fed, and finally returned; and here is the most remarkable thing about it. Instead of returning head first, as you would naturally expect, the *Fierasfer* slipped, not its head, but the tip of its tail into the orifice.

In a moment, the sea-cucumber relaxed, to draw in water, and the cunning fish slipped in an inch, then rested; another relaxation by the cucumber, and another inch gained, and so on, until, to the amazement of the Italian naturalist, the *Fierasfer* disappeared, tail first, within the very accommodating animal.

The *Fierasfer*, then, is a boarder in the sea-cucumber; a tenant that not only lives upon his host without pay, but does not hesitate to attack it when hungry. This has been proven by Professor Semper, who found pieces of the water lung of the living hotel in the stomach of the boarder; but, as we have seen, the former has the power of reproducing lost parts, and probably does not suffer. The boarder undoubtedly feeds upon the food taken by its host.

Throughout the country the average income of the practising physicians is said to be \$600, and if the words of that medical organ, "American Medicine," can be taken seriously, this average is being daily reduced. A few months ago it announced that the average for the New York doctor was \$1,500 a year, but now it says that a further drop to \$1,200 has taken place. The article in the medical magazine points out what it believes to be the most potent factor in the reduction of the doctors' dollars, this being the "abuse of medical charity." Every day, it says, from 3,000 to 5,000 people who could pay and should pay are treated free in New York city. Specialism is also mentioned as a cause of the decrease, the specialist having been so exalted that the layman has come to look upon the all-around physician as effete and unable to keep pace with the nimbleness of the modern microbe. Christian Science, quacks, cults, sanitation and prophylaxis are also mentioned as interceptors between the physician and a strong influx of the coin.



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